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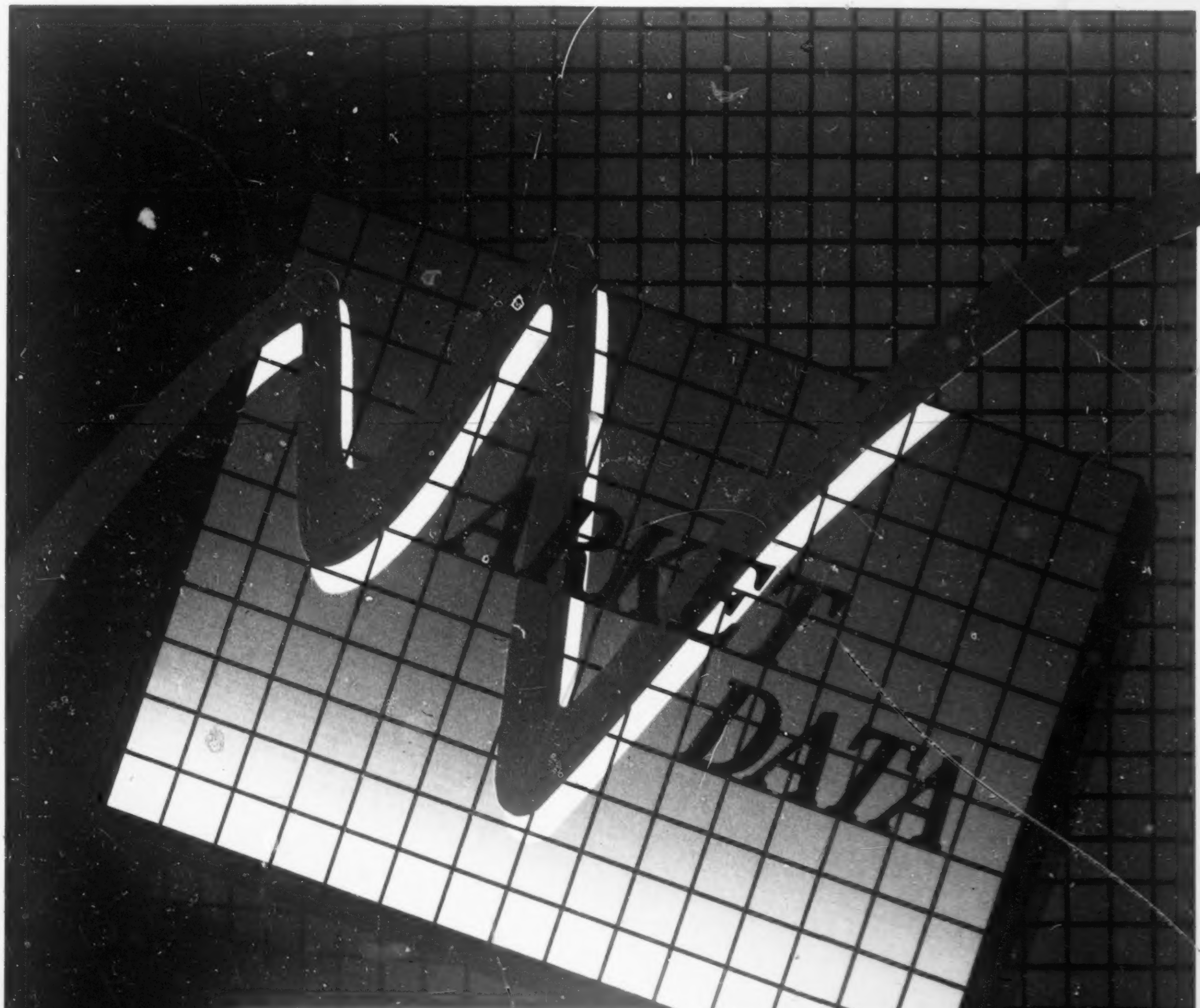
Lawn&Garden Marketing

NOV/DEC 1987

An Intertec publication

Reports on: NLGDA convention

L&G consumers • '88 OPE projections



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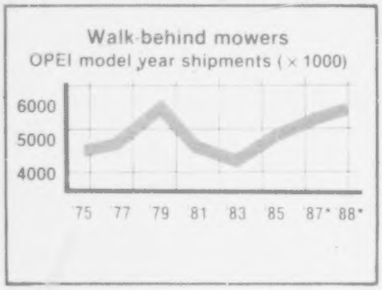

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Postmaster: Return form 3579 to Lawn & Garden Marketing, P.O. Box 12942, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.
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Editor's Notebook

Wendell J. Burns

Closing a notebook

One of the most immutable, interesting and welcome laws of life is change, and without further delay I will discuss a significant change that will occur with me and with *Lawn & Garden Marketing* magazine beginning with the January 1988 issue. After having served on the editorial staff since 1968, and as editor since April 1974, in January I will have a new function for the magazine—serving as consulting editor, specializing in covering in greater depth the power equipment segment of the lawn and garden business and in working on special projects for the magazine and in the industry.

Assuming the role of editor will be Susan Anderson, past staff editor, who has been instrumental over the past three years in implementing the new graphics, which have distinguished this magazine, and who has played a key role in all other editorial aspects of producing the magazine. And, in this, my closing Editor's Notebook for this publication, I will address the subject of change and also confront the reality that accompanies change and is not always welcome.

In spite of the inevitability of change, it is human nature to resist it. Change often suggests the unknown, the taking of chances, the moving from a comfortable degree of certainty to a position of uncertainty.

But, in recent years, we have all seen a willingness of some individuals, companies and trade associations to take those chances and come out winners. The OPEI's move to form the Louisville Expo is one example of a dramatic change that involved taking chances but worked to the benefit of the OPEI, its members and the industry.

On the non-power side of the business, there has been less success in forming a trade association of manufacturers or of retailers. But there is a vacuum there, and there are enough problems and opportunities in the non-power segment of the business to warrant the banding together of imaginative leaders who are willing to identify changes needed and willing to take the chances to initiate the formation of new associations.

Even though we have seen much progress and much profit from this growth industry, there remains some giant gaps in providing the kind of goods and services that consumers will need in the next 15 years. Getting to know the consumer and how to serve them is a matter that is going to require change for, and education of, those involved in marketing at all levels.

I recently read a comment by a management consultant who said that 17 percent of a manager's time should be spent in re-educating himself. There are many new opportunities for re-education, and those who make use of these opportunities will be the winners in this competitive market.

For the next 20 years, people are going to be talking about the 21st century, the new millennium, what it will mean to many aspects of people's lives. It could very well be that the next 12 years will mean even more change for this industry than has the past 25 years. And, in the process of change, there will be fortunes gained and fortunes lost; opportunities and ambitions fulfilled and opportunities missed. There will be new companies emerging, new trade groups forming, new types of retailing and distribution coming to the forefront to serve the public. To be part of this industry in the year 2,000, the companies, associations and individuals in it will have to change in many respects.

Meanwhile, it is my hope that the changes that you do undergo will be productive and profitable ones. That probably means planning and re-education to improve and sustain your business and your professionalism.

In signing off on this final issue under my editorship, I want to thank all of you who have cooperated with me through the years in articles, surveys, letters and plain friendship. That's something that will always remain and need not change.

—LGM

Lawn&Garden Marketing

LAWN & GARDEN MARKETING Vol. 26, No. 10 (USPS 306-340) is published 10 times annually January-April, June-November by Intertec Publishing Corp., 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212. Second-class postage paid at Shawnee Mission, KS and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12942, Overland Park, KS 66212.

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Subscription information: Publication is mailed free in the U.S. and Canada only to qualified persons in retail or wholesale businesses responsible for buying and merchandising product lines and services related to landscaping, gardening, turf, patio, indoor plants and leisure living. Non-qualified subscriptions are $24 a year in the U.S. and $30 in Canada and other countries. Foreign airmail optional at an additional $55 per year. Single copy price $2 plus postage and handling. Back issue price, $3 plus postage and handling. Adjustments necessitated by paid subscription termination at single copy rate. Allow 6-8 weeks for change of address or for new subscription processing. Subscription correspondence should be sent to P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.

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L&G participation level in '87

Results from the annual National Gardening Survey show U.S. household involvement in lawn and garden activities as stable in 1987. Nine out of 10 categories stayed at about the same level.

By Bruce Butterfield

Some 59 percent of the households in the United States participated in lawn care activities in 1987. This compares to 58 percent in 1986.

The percentage of households involved in tree care saw only one point change, from 24 percent in 1986 to 25 percent in 1987.

Early results of the 1987 National Gardening Survey indicate that participation in indoor and outdoor lawn and garden activities by U.S. households this year was about the same as in 1986. In total, 78 percent of all households participated in one or more forms of indoor or outdoor lawn and garden activity in 1987, the same percentage as in 1986. The survey is conducted annually for the National Gardening Assn. by the Gallup Organization Inc.

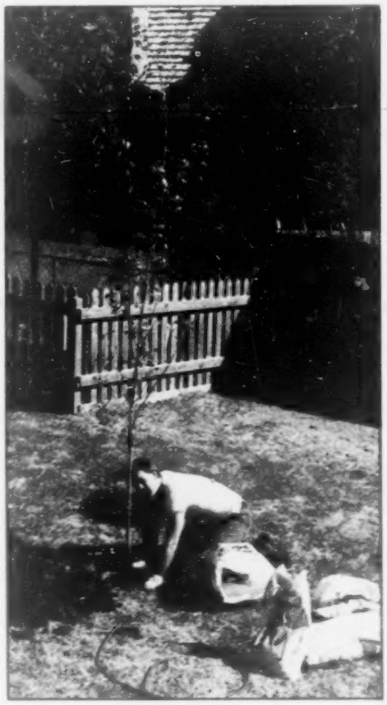
Of the 15 categories of DIY lawn and garden activities measured in 1987, 14 had participation rates equal to that seen in 1986, and only one category declined. The percentage of U.S. households participating in lawn care, flower gardening, maintaining indoor houseplants, insect control, shrub care, tree care, planting flowerbulbs, landscaping, growing fruit trees, raising transplants, container gardening, growing berries, ornamental gardening and herb gardening was statistically equal for each, given sampling tolerance, to participation rates seen last year.

The percentage of households with a vegetable garden declined by six percentage points, from 38 percent of households in 1986 to 32 percent of households in 1987.

While the percentage of households participating in lawn and garden activities in 1987 stayed at about the same level as in 1986, a small increase existed in the actual number of DIY lawn and garden households this year. This increase was due to the fact that the total U.S. household population went up from 88.5 million households in 1986 to 89.5 million households in 1987, or an increase of one million households. In total, there were 70 million lawn and garden households in 1987 compared with 69 million in 1986.

The number of households participating in ornamental gardening went up by 2 million households, and the number of households planting flowerbulbs was also up by 2 million households in 1987.

An increase of 1 million households during 1987 was also seen in each of the following categories: lawn care,



The category of landscaping saw a two point change, from 22 percent of households involved in 1986 to 24 percent of households in 1987.

The percentage of households with a vegetable garden declined by six percentage points, from 39 percent of households in 1986 to 32 percent of households in 1987.

shrub care, tree care, landscaping, fruit trees, raising transplants and herb gardening. On the downside, 6 million fewer households had vegetable gardens in 1987 than in 1986, 2 million fewer households practiced insect control this year than last and a decline of 1 million households with flower gardens existed in 1987 compared with 1986.

According to Charles Scott, president of the NGA, "Overall, the early results of this year's survey are positive. They reflect the fact that the number of households participating in a variety of lawn and garden activities in this country continues to represent sizeable market for a broad range of products. The customer base for most lawn and garden products was stable or increased along with the growth in the total number of households in the U.S. in 1987." Scott continues, "What this says to me is that the customers are out there and the challenge is to deliver products that are new, innovative, timely and targeted to specific needs. By year end, when we have received the survey results on product purchases and consumer spending in 1987, I would not be surprised to see that product purchases have increased this year and that total dollars spent by consumers on lawn and garden will be up over 1986." —LGM

Bruce Butterfield, author of this article, is director of research for the National Gardening Assn.

Each year NGA publishes the *National Gardening Survey* based on research conducted by the Gallup Organization Inc. The Survey looks at U.S. household participation in lawn and garden activities, how much consumers spend, products purchased and other related subjects of interest.

The NGA is a member-supported, non-profit organization with headquarters in Burlington, Vt. Its 200,000 members receive the organization's monthly magazine, *National Gardening*, which, in addition to providing gardening information, permits members to exchange ideas and inquiries through its pages. The organization also offers members a Gardening Answer Service managed by staff horticulturists.

In addition, NGA also recently published *Gardeners' Questions Answered*, expert advice and practical solutions to gardening problems, and the 12-volume "Yardening" series of videocassettes. And NGA is developing Grow Lab elementary science education programs using gardening as a hands-on learning tool. NGA's address is 180 Flynn Ave., Burlington, VT 05401, (802)863-1308.

U.S. household participation in lawn and garden activities

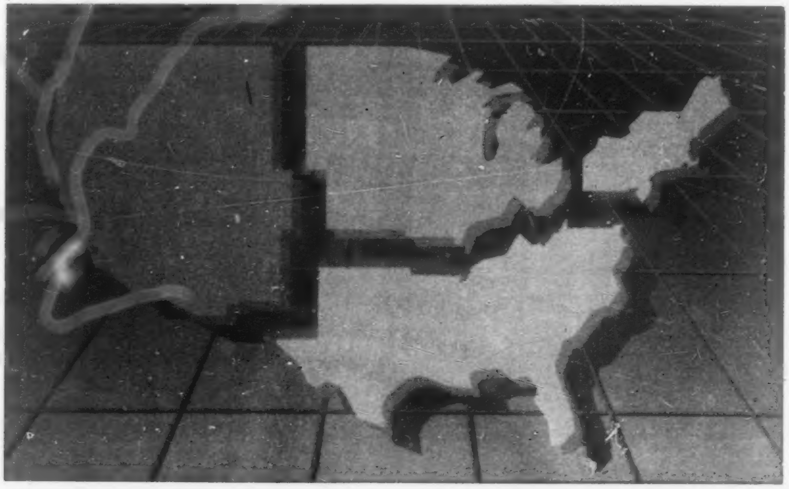
Activity	1982 %	1983 %	1984 %	1985 %	1986 %	1987 %	Point Change	Ave. age 1982-1987	(Millions of households) 1986	1987	Change
Lawn care	63	63	63	64	58	59	+1	62	51	52	+1
Flower gardening	50	47	47	41	44	43	−1	45	39	38	−1
Indoor houseplants	48	43	46	42	41	41	0	44	36	36	0
Vegetable gardening	46	42	40	37	38	32	−6	39	34	28	−6
Shrub care	42	35	36	30	31	32	+1	34	27	28	+1
Insect control	39	32	38	27	33	30	−3	33	29	27	−2
Tree care	30	25	26	20	24	25	+1	25	21	22	+1
Landscaping	26	23	25	23	22	24	+2	24	20	21	+1
Fruit trees	22	20	18	17	17	18	+1	19	15	16	+1
Raising transplants	18	15	17	11	13	14	+1	15	11	12	+1
Growing berries	13	12	11	7	8	8	0	10	7	7	0
Ornamental gardening	10	7	9	7	6	8	+2	8	5	7	+2
Flower bulbs	na	25	27	19	24	26	+2	24	21	23	+2
Container gardening	na	na	na	na	12	12	0	12	11	11	0
Herb gardening	na	na	na	na	6	7	+1	7	5	6	+1
Total**	86	82	83	84	78	78	0	82	69	70	+1

**Total is the % of U.S. households that participated in at least one type of indoor/outdoor lawn and garden activity each year.

Source: National Gardening Assn./Gallup Organization

Product Movement Report

Spring/Summer 1987



West

Product	% Up	% Same	% Down
Walk-behinds	[illegible]	17	12
Spin trimmers	27	34	9
Riders	[illegible]	15	17
Garden tractors	9	14	15
Replace. parts	26	32	5
Herbicides	27	30	3
Insecticides	23	33	6
Lawn fertilizers:			
Granular	[illegible]	27	5
Liquid	[illegible]	17	3
Soluble	17	28	3
Special	16	28	9
Watering equip.	24	32	3
Grass seed	28	33	6
Packet seeds:			
Annuals	18	30	8
Perennials	16	27	8
Trees, shrubs	17	9	2
Tools:			
Long-handled	27	33	8
Cutting	27	38	6
Short-handled	23	42	6
Sprayers:			
Hose-end	28	33	6
Elect.-powered	3	14	—
Gas-powered	5	16	—
Hand-pump	28	38	6
Planters	17	16	8
Bird feeders	14	27	—

Based on % of those carrying the product line, indicating sales movement.

Source: *L&M* spring/summer 1987 survey.

North Central

Product	% Up	% Same	% Down
Walk-behinds	36	31	13
Spin trimmers	28	33	16
Riders	18	36	10
Garden tractors	12	24	14
Replace. parts	45	27	7
Herbicides	16	21	5
Insecticides	18	23	2
Lawn fertilizers:			
Granular	16	23	7
Liquid	10	23	2
Soluble	8	27	—
Special	10	27	2
Watering equip.	18	16	11
Grass seed	20	12	5
Packet seeds:			
Annuals	7	17	13
Perennials	8	18	8
Trees, shrubs	12	6	1
Tools:			
Long-handled	10	25	11
Cutting	10	38	8
Short-handled	7	33	12
Sprayers:			
Hose-end	11	28	6
Elect.-powered	1	8	1
Gas-powered	2	11	2
Hand-pump	12	24	6
Planters	10	11	6
Bird feeders	16	16	6

Based on % of those carrying the product line, indicating sales movement.

Source: *L&M* spring/summer 1987 survey.

Nationally sales in 24 of 27 spring and summer product categories increased according to retailers responding to this *Lawn & Garden Marketing* survey. Only one category, barbecue grills, showed a decrease in overall sales. (For more information on barbecue grill sales and patio furniture sales, results are covered separately on pages 56 and 57 in this issue.) Sales in two categories, garden tractors and annual packet seeds, were flat.

The Northeast showed gains in garden/utility tractors. However, the rest of the country did not reflect these same increases—no surprise to most retailers, since garden tractor sales have been in proportion to vegetable gardening's popularity, which has never matched the boom it experienced in the '70s.

Of the 74 percent of power equipment dealers handling garden/utility tractors, 23 percent said sales had increased, but 20 percent said that sales had decreased. Another 30 percent said sales remained the same as 1986. Of those indicating a decrease in sales, most said sales were down 15 percent or more.

On a positive note, walk-behind mowers showed significant gains—this is in keeping with recent statistics released by analysts at Wharton Econometrics (see page 14, this issue). Of power equipment dealers carrying the line, 49 percent indicated that their walk-behind sales were up, compared to only 11.1 percent who showed them as down. More than half of those indicating increased sales also reported that their sales had increased by 15 percent or more.

OPE servicing dealers found a bright spot in sales of replacement parts, too. Of the 96 percent of power equipment dealers carrying the parts, 61 percent said that sales had increased, and nearly half of these said sales had increased by 15-24 percent. Only 6 percent of the power equipment dealers said sales decreased.

Sales of liquid RTU fertilizers were up, too, according to respondents. Although this category of fertilizers is still fairly young—though at last count some 27 manufacturers were in the ball game—these products still are showing signs of overall growth. These increases are coupled with the fact that consumers'

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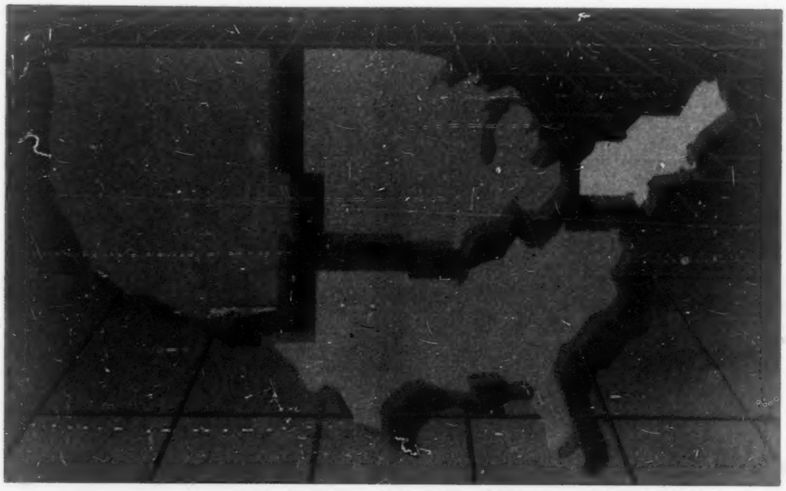


South

Product	% Up	% Same	% Down
Walk-behinds	48	32	17
Spin trimmers	33	38	12
Riders	27	28	16
Garden tractors	20	22	6
Replace. parts	44	28	8
Herbicides	19	27	4
Insecticides	19	28	6
Lawn fertilizers:			
Granular	21	24	4
Liquid	8	20	5
Soluble	8	23	1
Special	7	32	5
Watering equip.	27	25	4
Grass seed	17	19	9
Packet seeds:			
Annuals	7	28	4
Perennials	7	29	3
Trees, shrubs	8	9	4
Tools:			
Long-handled	17	40	5
Cutting	17	45	3
Short-handled	11	51	1
Sprayers:			
Hose-end	13	41	8
Elect.-powered	1	13	1
Gas-powered	3	14	—
Hand-pump	10	31	5
Planters	5	19	1
Bird feeders	15	[illegible]	5

Based on % of those carrying the product line, indicating sales movement.

Source: *LGM* spring/summer 1987 survey.

Northeast

Product	% Up	% Same	% Down
Walk-behinds	30	27	7
Spin trimmers	20	29	11
Riders	27	17	6
Garden tractors	17	13	10
Replace. parts	37	26	—
Herbicides	21	26	6
Insecticides	20	20	5
Lawn fertilizers:			
Granular	30	15	8
Liquid	18	14	5
Soluble	24	23	1
Special	17	32	2
Watering equip.	19	28	5
Grass seed	36	21	2
Packet seeds:			
Annuals	14	25	10
Perennials	13	31	5
Trees, shrubs	16	14	5
Tools:			
Long-handled	17	31	5
Cutting	14	35	5
Short-handled	10	38	5
Sprayers:			
Hose-end	17	27	5
Elect.-powered	1	11	—
Gas-powered	5	14	—
Hand-pump	10	27	6
Planters	13	18	2
Bird feeders	14	20	5

Based on % of those carrying the product line, indicating sales movement.

Source: *LGM* spring/summer 1987 survey.

Product movement...continued

acceptance of liquid fertilizers seems to be wide-spread.

Granular fertilizers, too, fared well over last year, especially through garden centers. Of the garden centers that handle these products, 53 percent said sales were up, and of these, 22 percent said sales increases were greater than 10 percent.

Soluble fertilizer sales also were on the upswing in the garden centers. Of the 79 percent carrying the line, 35 percent showed an increase; less than 2 percent showed a decrease. Herbicides and insecticides followed the fertilizer lead, with 43 and 46 percent respectively indicating sales increases in garden centers. Less than 9 percent said sales were down.

Grass seed seems to have been in high demand this past year. Forty-six percent of the garden centers handling grass seed responded with an increase in sales this past year; only 11 percent said sales were down.

Even sales of birdfeeders increased over the spring and summer sales season; garden centers accounted for the largest gains. Some 41 percent said sales were up, compared to only 9 percent who said sales were down, obviously reflecting a trend in an increased interest among consumers in backyard wildlife—a trend, in fact, that was noted in the October '87 issue *American Demographics* magazine.

The report noted that, "While the numbers of backyard wildlife watchers grew from 80 million (in 1980) to 105 million (in 1985), the number of people taking trips to observe wildlife remained around 29 million." Expenditures on "backyard wildlife" equipment—birdhouses, baths and feeders—were $222 million in 1985; another $1.1 billion was spent on birdseed. **—LGM**

The spring/summer 1987 survey results were based on 308 responses from three categories of retailers: garden centers, hardware/home centers and power equipment dealers. Respondents were asked to compare sales of product categories in spring/summer 1987 to spring/summer 1986.

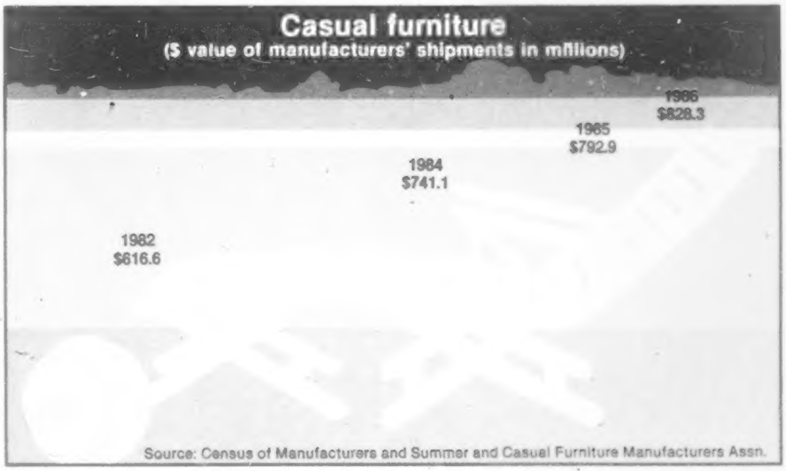
'88 projected as billion dollar year

For the first time, the year 1988 will see summer and casual furniture become a billion dollar industry, according to Summer and Casual Furniture Manufacturers Assn. president, Tom Hebson. "Now, 1988 looks more positive than ever," Hebson says. "The stock market (crash) has had literally no effect. Everybody is upbeat."

In 1986, just as the umbrellas went up on casual furniture, so did its shipments. U.S. manufacturers shipped $828.3 million in casual furniture in 1986 compared to $792.9 million in 1985, an increase of more than 10 percent, according to SCFMA estimates.

Shipment data for 1987 was not available from the association at press time, but results from a *Lawn & Garden Marketing* survey provide an indicator of how sales fared through lawn and garden outlets in 1987. Although only about one in eight garden centers carry the line, more than 12.3 percent of those reported an increase in sales. And nearly 9 percent of those said their sales were up 15 percent or more. One in three of the hardware/home centers surveyed said they carry casual furniture, but nearly half said their sales remained flat.

What do the upcoming casual furniture trends look like for 1988? *National Casual Market Preview* magazine says more patterns will be seen in fabrics. Cotton prints, woven vinyls, jacquards and stripes are the favorites. Styling will see many collections that are suitable for inside or outside use. Soft, rich colors will get special attention including peach, mint green, teal and turquoise. —LGM



Source: Census of Manufacturers and Summer and Casual Furniture Manufacturers Assn.

THIS PRETTY MUCH EXPLAINS WHY.

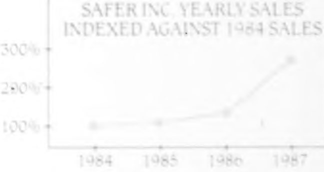
Conventional, petrochemical-based pesticides aren't exactly setting sales records these days. Increased consumer sensitivity to their risks and more stringent EPA standards, including the banning of some products, are all taking their toll.

On the other hand, consider the reception Safer *non-toxic* pesticides are receiving. In the last year alone, fueled by heightened consumer awareness and on-going national advertising support, our sales have more than doubled (see chart).

Make sure you devote plenty of shelf space to the Safer expanded line. Otherwise, you might find yourself flat out.

Safer™
The Safer Pesticide

Circle (35) on Reply Card



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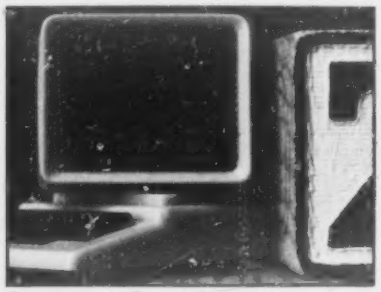
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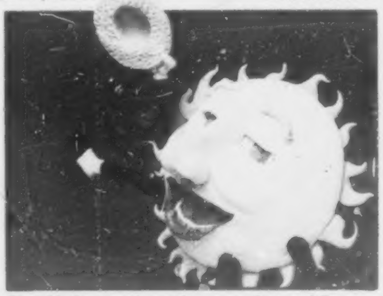
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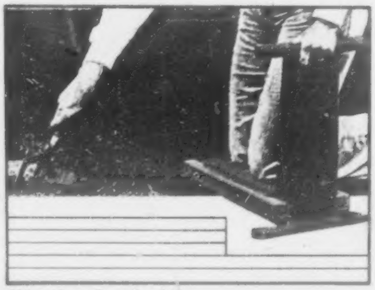
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Computers have helped these L&G retailers build upon the business basics. Some say incorporating the units into retail operation has been as easy as ABC; others point out the stumbling blocks. . . . 6

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Industry pushes for better landscape evaluations

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These products generated the most reader inquiries during the months in which they ran in 1987. If you didn't request information on them, your competitor probably did. Here's your chance, then, to get the low-down on the top 10. . . . 28

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Postmaster: Return form 3579 to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12942, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.

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From the Editor

It seems only appropriate that it is the beginning of a new year as I take over the editorship of this publication—a new beginning with an old understanding: that readers are earned from month to month, that there are no absolutes in publishing.

In the same way, there are no absolutes in retailing: customers are earned from project to project. One of the most important details you can learn about me is the fact that I am an avid DIYer. Home improvement projects, not least among them lawn and garden projects, are a passion of mine.

Last summer my husband and I sold our 60-year-old home, which we spent nearly four years renovating. From bathrooms to kitchens, guttering to roofing, electrical to plumbing, we tackled it all. On our acre-property were numerous fruit trees (from which I canned) and an abundance of other plant material needing care. As the property had been neglected for several years, we found ourselves in need of a chainsaw and a brushcutter; I safely learned to operate both.

In light of my own expertise, I read with interest a recent study profiling the average American DIYer. This study found that a significant number of DIYers were aged 25 and under; 80 percent of those were "frequent" or "occasional" DIYers. The study concluded that this age group "bodes well for the future as this group will be tomorrow's homeowners and heavy spenders."

On the outset, I think this conclusion is sound, though in need of considerable elaboration. I believe that compared to older DIYers, those under the age of 25 tackle projects for different reasons. Younger DIYers are most apt to have the stamina for major projects, most apt to have the time (due to fewer responsibilities) and least apt to have the money for, therefore the option of, hiring a project for completion. As DIYers age, a number of other factors enter into their decisions.

When my husband and I owned our first home, we were between the ages of 24 and 28; we had one child, fewer responsibilities and fewer obligations. Following the birth of our second child, our priorities changed; we could not conceive of tackling another renovation project. We purchased a smaller home, which required only minor decorative changes inside and relandscaping outside. We decided that, because of additional family responsibilities and two demanding careers, our time simply was too valuable. Now, we pick and choose projects based on the amount of time involved and the amount of enjoyment derived from doing it ourselves. What we see as less enjoyable projects lose out altogether. I strongly believe that young DIYers mature to make similar choices.

Lawn and garden projects will be among those projects thrown aside in favor of others if retailers don't compete effectively. The lawn and garden retailer's strongest competitor is not even in this industry; he's in a number of unrelated industries altogether. Warner Frazier, president of Simplicity Mfg., once summarized: "A big body of customers view yardwork as a chore, and we have to make sure the unpleasantness is minimized...We are competing with VCRs and other luxury products for the consumer's disposable income."

I think we all have something to gain from his observation: the understanding that consumers are indeed fickle and that to win them over as long-term lawn and garden customers is going to take more than a demonstration of the rewards of a successful project; you have to convince them that it's fun, too.

Susan L. Anderson

Lawn&Garden Marketing

LAWN & GARDEN MARKETING Vol. 27, No. 1 (USPS 306-340) is published 10 times annually January-April, June-November by Intertec Publishing Corp., 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212. Second-class postage paid at Shawnee Mission, KS and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12942, Overland Park, KS 66212.

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Subscription information: Publication is mailed free in the U.S. and Canada only to qualified persons in retail or wholesale businesses responsible for buying and merchandising product lines and services related to landscaping, gardening, turf, patio, indoor plants and leisure living. Non-qualified subscriptions are $24 a year in the U.S. and $30 in Canada and other countries. Foreign airmail optional at an additional $55 per year. Single copy price $2 plus postage and handling. Back issue price, $3 plus postage and handling. Adjustments necessitated by paid subscription termination at single copy rate. Allow 6-8 weeks for change of address or for new subscription processing. Subscription correspondence should be sent to P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.

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Correspondence: All correspondence should be addressed to 9221 Quivira Road, P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212; (913)888-4664.

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The new kid on the block

Computers have helped these L&G retailers build upon the business basics. Some say incorporating the units into retail operation has been as easy as ABC; others point out the stumbling blocks.

By **Brad Bambarger**, *editorial contributor*

Top 10 retail computer uses

1. Accounts receivable
2. Inventory control
3. Maintaining customer lists
4. General ledger
5. Reordering stock
6. Accounts payable
7. Payroll
8. Newsletters/promotions
9. Producing price labels
10. Mark-downs

Source: 1987 *LGM* questionnaire
Based on percentage of retailers using computers

Computers have a bite on nearly every aspect of our daily lives. Not only do the phone company and the stock exchange crucially depend on them, but even elementary school classrooms and preschools make use of these high-tech tools.

Nowhere are computers more prevalent or useful than in business, however. The lawn and garden retailing industry, like any other business, can benefit from the speed, accuracy and resulting efficiency of computers.

Systems boasting a variety of costs, configurations, hardware brands and software programs have flooded the market in recent years, leaving retailers awash in a sea of computer choices. When sorting through the options, retailers should keep in mind what tasks they want the computer to accomplish, then seek out the software that best fills those specific needs.

Robert Stevenson, president of Hillside Nursery, Carbondale, Ill., is a strident proponent of such a tactic when shopping for a computer. "First of all, get ahold of someone who knows software; you buy software first, not hardware. You say (to them), 'This is what I want done. What's the most cost-effective software that'll do it for me?'" Stevenson says.

"Buying a load of hardware then learning how to make it work for you is like learning how to play poker in Las Vegas; it's going to cost you," he adds.

Stevenson, whose store posts $350,000 in annual sales, invested $3,000 in a stand-alone system two years ago. His setup consists of a Nutshell inventory software package, BPI accounting and Leading Edge word processing programs and Epson hardware. "My system just replaces the pen and paper, but it will do 97.5 percent of what a dedicated system will do," he says. A dedicated system is one in which a computer is being used for one specific function.

Tailoring a program to your needs

Vos Mower Sales in Grand Rapids, Mich., is also in the $350,000-range in annual sales, but Bernie Fridsma, president, took a different route in establishing his business in the computer age. About 10 years ago, Fridsma invested $52,000 in a dedicated system, which included Litton/Royal hardware and custom-made software. He and a hired programmer designed a set of programs ideally tailored to his operation. He explains the high cost as due to the fact that it was purchased 10 years ago. He says the same system today would likely cost $25,000.

Fridsma says the system, which is composed of five terminals and two printers, paid for itself within four years. Vos Mower Sales now uses the system for point-of-sale functions and invoicing, accounts payable and receivable, payroll, two-year parts histories, tracking warranties and, most importantly, inventory control and forecasting for more than 15,000 line items. "We don't do anything without it," he says.

Getting the works

Phil Rutt, president of Hollinger's Lawn and Garden Equipment, headquartered in Ephrata, Pa., says that after shopping a dozen other computer companies he chose a C Systems turnkey—complete software, hardware and the works—setup. He says he opted for the C Systems package because of its reasonable price and the manufacturer's willingness to somewhat customize the programs to accommodate special aspects of a particular business, such as rental or old parts departments.

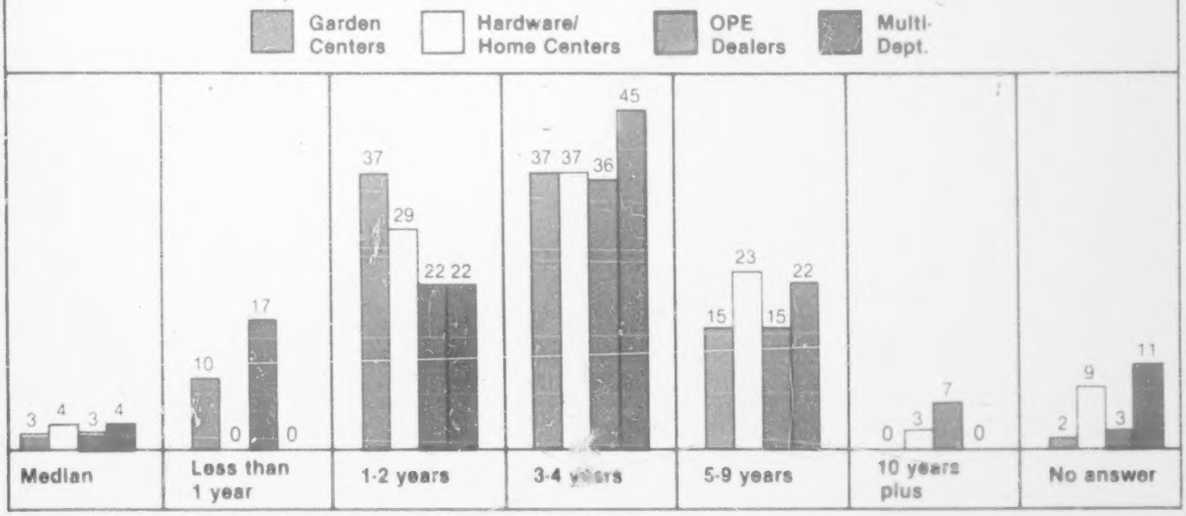
"Most software is set up to work for a vanilla-type shop; make sure the software you choose can take care of the unique needs of your business," he advises.

Hollinger's, with three stores, spent $30,000 on the complete C Systems package with IBM hardware. Rutt says the shop management and reduction of excess inventory afforded by the system quickly paid off the original costs.

Rutt adds that the trying process of turning on the whole staff to the computer is just a matter of education. "People hate the machine for the first few weeks, then they learn to love it as they learn the system," he explains.

continued...

Pay-back period for computer investment
(including hardware, software and training*)



Source: 1987 *LGM* questionnaire. * Based on percentage of retailers using computers.

Computers*...continued*

Nancy Doane, office manager for Midstate Tractor & Equipment, Middletown, Conn., says that to help maintain an easy flow of business during installation, her staff ran the necessary cable themselves, cutting down on the inconvenience and getting the system on-line faster.

Midstate Tractor, which does $3.5 million in annual sales from its one store, has had its Softpower/Laughlin Associates system for only a few months; the company invested $13,000 for the Softpower software and AST hardware.

Getting the support you need

One of the major considerations when choosing a system, ranking alongside suitable software and optimum price, is service—that is, easily obtained and expert support from the software manufacturer. Doane raves about the support Midstate Tractor has received from the Softpower people, reporting that the company is readily available by phone to answer questions toll-free and can solve certain problems directly long distance via a modem (telephone-computer) hookup.

The consensus among many retailers who employ computers is that the most profit-generating portion of the system is the automatic inventory control. The computer keeps track of everything after each sale, lets you know at the touch of a button just what you have, orders stock when you're out and generally trims the fat off your inventory.

Brands of hardware used

	Multi-Dept. %	Garden Centers %	Hardware/ Home Centers %	OPE Dealers %
IBM	20.0	14.8	15.1	11.8
Triad	10.0	1.6	22.6	1.8
Texas Instruments	–	1.6	7.6	6.4
Apple	–	13.1	3.8	0.9
Radio Shack	–	6.6	–	2.7
Commodore	–	1.6	–	3.6
Tandy	–	1.6	–	3.6
AT&T	–	4.9	–	0.9
Kaypro	–	1.6	3.8	0.9
Altos	10.0	1.6	–	0.9
Basic Four	10.0	3.3	–	–
Digital	10.0	1.6	–	0.9
Epson	–	1.6	–	1.8
Pertec	–	3.3	1.9	–
Televideo	–	1.6	1.9	0.9
Columbia	–	–	–	1.8
DEC	–	1.6	1.9	–
North Star	–	–	–	1.8
Sayno	–	–	–	1.8
Wang	–	1.6	1.9	–
Other	10.0	21.3	–	10.9

Source: 1987 *LGM* questionnaire
Based on 234 respondents

When it comes to inserting the mass of inventory information into the computer's memory, some software vendors will input it for a client. The National Farm and Power Equipment Dealer's Association, which markets the Challenger system, handles such tasks as part of a two-week, on-site training program. A major element in Anne and Barry Dattalo's decision to lease their computer from Ideal Computer Systems was that the software was designed *by* a power equipment dealer *for* a power equipment dealer. A more specific, as well as attractive, feature of the program was its ability to use the original equipment manufacturer's own part numbers. Some programs necessitate having the user create an entirely new numbering system to apply to the inventory. To reassign new numbers to a 42,000-item inventory, such as the Dattalo's, would simply be overwhelming.

The Dattalo's, who own A&B Outdoor Equipment in Nederland, Texas, were able to eliminate one employee, whom Barry characterizes as a full-time record keeper, thanks to the workload assumed by the computer. This company's system not only handles the big jobs that help cut overhead, but Barry says the system also does little things, such as figure sales tax reports at the end of the month.

However, Barry stresses that for all the good a computer can bring to your retail operation, it can't run it for you. "The first thing a retailer needs to do is understand his business—what it takes to make a profit. He's got to realize what a computer is. It's a number cruncher; it only puts out what you put in," he says.

Jack Jones, owner of a complete lawn and garden center in Auburn and one in Redmond, Wash., both of which carry nursery goods, chemicals, power equipment and pet supplies, had a less-than-gratifying experience with his first foray into computerized retailing several years ago. He says he received poor results and nearly non-existent support for his initial software programs, which he says were ostensibly geared for wholesaling rather than retailing.

continued on page 12...

Computers *...continued*

However, Jones says his present venture has been "like night and day compared to the previous software company." Jones' stores, which do around $3 million in annual sales, are outfitted with a complete package from Triad Systems Corp. The eight-terminal setup cost about $80,000 after a discount from the trade-in of Jones' previous system.

Jones is sold on buying a turnkey system from one supplier vs. buying the software and hardware separately; a turnkey system is a complete hardware/software setup from one supplier, which allows the owner to "turn the key" and go. He insists that it can be "a real plus to call just one toll-free number for any questions about any part of the system."

Pay only for what you need

Not every dealership needs to invest enormous sums of money into a state-of-the-art computer system, however. You should only pay for what you can use. One retailer likened using a certain expensive, powerful software program not ideally suited for a medium-sized lawn and garden retailer to "using an 18-wheeler to cart your groceries home."

Michael Reesey, owner of Michael's Power Equipment, Timonium, Md., advises retailers to "shop around and realize that you can get effective computer setups for not that much money; you don't have to spend a fortune to do the job."

Reesey is so pleased with the performance and support of his Icas system that he is going to purchase an identical one for a second store he's opening. He says he has no doubt his computer saves his employees' time, thus making his business more profitable.

Software programs used

	Multi-Dept. %	Garden Centers %	Hardware/ Home Centers %	OPE Dealers %
Triad	10.0	1.6	17.0	0.9
Lotus	10.0	4.9	1.9	0.9
Excaliber by Armor	—	—	—	4.6
Peachtree	—	—	3.8	2.7
The Profit System (PFS)	—	—	—	4.6
Apple	—	3.3	1.9	0.9
Dealer Informations Systems (DIS)	—	—	—	3.6
Radio Shack	—	3.3	—	1.8
Dbase	—	3.3	1.9	—
National Farm Power	—	—	—	2.7
Pace (Ace Hardware)	—	—	5.7	—
Word Perfect	—	3.3	1.9	—
Word Star	—	3.3	1.9	—
Accounting Plus	—	—	—	1.8
ADP	10.0	—	—	0.9
Basic Four	10.0	1.6	—	—
BPI	—	1.6	1.9	—
CSC	—	—	1.9	0.9
John Deere	—	—	—	1.8
Great Plains	—	1.6	—	0.9
IBM	10.0	—	1.9	—
Slice	—	3.3	—	—
Supercalc	—	1.6	1.9	—
Xtra Soft	—	—	—	1.8
Other	50.0	49.2	24.5	16.4
Written in-house/custom	—	11.5	5.7	10.0

Source: 1987 *LGM* questionnaire
Based on 234 respondents

Making your computer a marketing tool

Creative uses of a computer—uses beyond inventory control or accounting functions—can turn a system into a true marketing, money-making implement. Debi Ledford, office manager of Crabapple Nursery and Landscaping, Roswell, Ga., uses a Slice/Thornton Computer Management system, which is utilized for, among other things, putting together a monthly newsletter. The system was created especially for nurseries and garden centers.

Crabapple's newsletter consists of a main feature article written by the owner or one of the store's landscape architects plus sales information and gardening tips. From composition on the computer to the outside printing company to the postage, the newsletter costs only $1,000 a month to produce. Two and a half years ago, the newsletter went out to 500 Crabapple customers; it now has a circulation of 6,500.

Ledford testifies that a newsletter is one of the most cost-effective ways to advertise a business. "It's definitely one of the best things we ever could have done," she says.

Another cost-effective way to advertise is through the use of co-op ads. And one computer company makes *buying* its software even more cost-effective; Select Media Inc., Hopkins, Minn., claims that its specialized accounting software, S.M.I.L.E.S., tracks co-op advertising and will give a return on investment in six months or less. The program tracks claims and organizes co-op advertising for retailers—one use for a computer about which many retailers may not have given any thought.

"It's a software that not only saves the retailer lost co-op dollars but makes money too. Its purpose is control for the retailers since it's his money to begin with," says Jane Denny, Select Media vice president.

To understand truly what you're getting into and what you may get out of it, many computerized retailers suggest that before settling on a computer system, go to a shop that's using the system in question and watch it work. Seeing a system function in a busy environment similar to your own will make a decision easier. Also, think ahead and plan for a system that will be able to expand; you don't want to outgrow your investment. —LGM

For more information about hardware or software programs mentioned in this article, contact:

Acacia Software, P.O. Box 90525, Santa Barbara, CA 93190; 805-962-4516.

C Systems Software, 1499 Regal Row, Dallas, TX 75247; 214-634-4442.

Data Line Corp., 43 Danbury Rd., Wilton, CT, 06897; 203-762-2473.

Icas Computer Systems, 160 Woodport Rd., Sparta, NJ 07871; 201-729-3197.

Ideal Computer Systems Inc., 2345 Blairs Ferry Rd. NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402; 319-393-0228.

InfoVision, 2040 Great Highway, San Francisco, CA 94116; 415-566-4041.

Laughlin Associates Inc., 186 Grassy Plain St., P.O. Box 647, Bethel, CT 06801; 203-798-0469.

NFPEDA, 10877 Watson Rd., St. Louis, MO 63126-0517; 314-821-0674.

Select Media Inc., 532 Fifth Ave. S., Hopkins, MN 55343; 612-933-1014.

Thornton Computer Management Systems, 424 East US 22, Maineville, OH 45039; 800-543-7249.

Triad Systems Corp., 1252 Orleans Dr., PO Box 61779, Sunnyvale, CA 94088-1779; 408-734-9720.

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An Intertec publication

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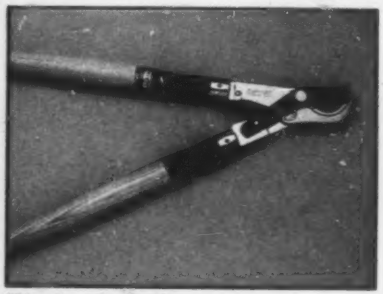
Lawn&Garden Marketing®

The merchandising magazine for lawn, garden and leisure living products.

FEBRUARY 1988 VOL. 27, NO.2 PUBLISHED 10 TIMES ANNUALLY



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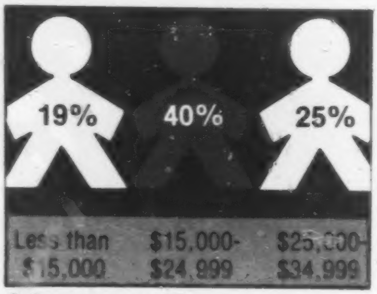

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- **Electric mowers**
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Postmaster: Return form 3579 to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12942, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.
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From the Editor

Few can appreciate the life of a lawn and garden retailer more than I. As I was growing up, my father worked in retailing. In fact, nearly 30 years ago he helped establish the first lawn and garden department for what was then Katz Drugs. Then, as the buyer, he made decisions for its hardlines and traveled from Kansas City to Texas to select greengoods for the chain's nearly 50 retail outlets.

My father had worked for Katz for more than eight years when he left to join the staff of another discounter, Skagway, in Omaha, Neb. There he filled the position of personnel manager. Skagway later was purchased by Skaggs Drugs, a division of American Stores—which, ironically, later purchased Katz and then Osco Drug and now operates the drug chains under the Osco name. In 1968 he left retailing after 14 years to seek greater financial rewards in real estate sales.

When my father worked in retailing, I thought he had the most glamourous job in the world. Our biggest thrill as children was to be taken to the store on Saturdays where we could watch the hum of customer activity from the offices above the sales floor. We'd gather sheets of blank paper and smelly magic-markers from vacant desks, and my brother and I would draw for hours, copying sale signs and media ad boards that lay around. There were many of those Saturdays. I later realized that working Saturdays was not the thrill for my father that it was for my brother and I—that under the guise of fun for us was simply hard work and long hours away from family and activities for my father.

Readers, like yourself, have painted a similar picture of retailing. In fact, many of you have said lawn and garden retailing is particularly unrewarding financially (see "What's the payoff in lawn & garden?," page 18). In the '60s, as the Katz horticulture and pet buyer, my father's salary was $6,000 per year; he was the main support for a family of five. The majority of department buyers responding to our own salary survey indicated they made less than $25,000 in 1987. Taking into consideration inflation, retail salaries haven't increased significantly in 25 years...and they aren't likely to. Today, the average retail employee makes $7.85 per hour or $16,328 per year.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts significant job growth for retail and wholesale trade personnel at 2.8 million additional jobs over the next 10 years. The question here is if retailing continues to be unrewarding financially, what kind of employees will it attract?

Furthermore, *American Demographics* magazine reported in a recent issue: "The requirements of the jobs that need to be filled over the next decade are not in balance with the skills and geographic locations of job seekers. With fewer new workers, employers will be increasingly dependent on the ability and willingness of the existing work force to learn new skills and move to new locations."

In my father's case, the latter was true. He found greater opportunity elsewhere and moved his family from Kansas City to Omaha. But even with a better position there, he was still in retail—where four-day holidays are non-existent, 50-plus hours per week are the norm and six-day workweeks are the rule. I guess for most retailers that's the long and short of it; but maybe for others, that's the glamour of it.

Susan L. Anderson

Lawn & Garden Marketing

LAWN & GARDEN MARKETING Vol. 27, No. 2 (USPS 306-340) is published 10 times annually Jan-April, June-Nov by Intertec Publishing Corp., 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212, (913)888-4664. Second-class postage paid at Shawnee Mission, KS and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12942, Overland Park, KS 66212.

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Subscription Information: Publication is mailed free in the U.S. and Canada only to qualified persons in retail or wholesale businesses responsible for buying and merchandising product lines and services related to landscaping, gardening, turf, patio, indoor plants and leisure living. Non-qualified subscriptions are $24 a year in the U.S. and $30 in Canada and other countries. Foreign airmail optional at an additional $55 per year. Single copy price $2 plus postage and handling. Back issue price, $3 plus postage and handling. Adjustments necessitated by paid subscription termination at single copy rate. Allow 6-8 weeks for change of address or for new subscription processing. Subscription correspondence should be sent to P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.

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What's the pay off in lawn & garden?

Despite long hours and low pay, the results from *Lawn & Garden Marketing's* salary survey show that people in this industry keep with it for one important reason: they like it.

By **Gina Kellogg Hogan**, *associate editor*

More than 60 percent of employed Americans are satisfied with and enjoy their jobs, according to a survey reported in *American Demographics* magazine. These results are in step with *Lawn & Garden Marketing's* annual salary survey questionnaire.

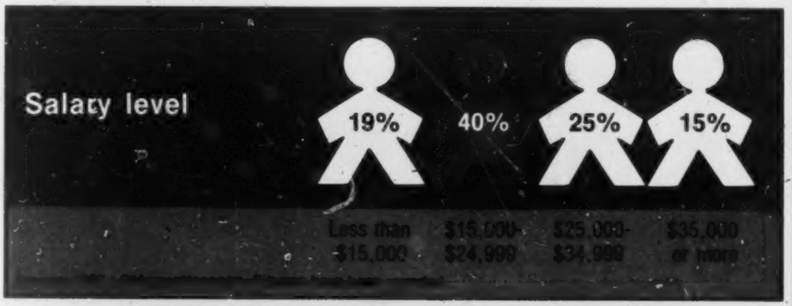
More than three out of four of the respondents to *LGM's* October 1987 questionnaire were store managers, although assistant managers, owners, presidents, vice presidents and department managers and buyers were also represented in the survey.

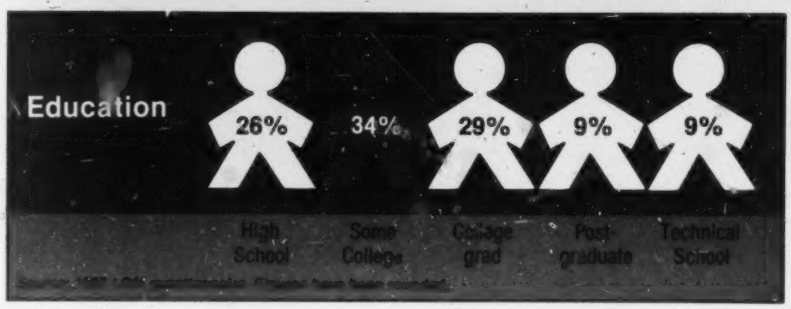
On the average, most of the respondents expressed their positive thoughts about working in the lawn and garden industry. But a significant number of respondents indicated they were unhappy with their jobs.

A profile of the average respondent to our survey follows: A store manager, he has worked in the industry about 14 years, 9.6 of these in his current job. At just over 39 years old, he has some college, is paid $23,000 a year and received a 9.3 percent salary increase during the past year. He works about 53 hours during a six-day work week—averaging about 9 hours a day.

Even when broken out into separate categories—of hardware/home center, multi-department store, power equipment dealer and garden center—the average profiles do not differ that much from one another.

For example, the average hardware/home center respondent—a male—works 52 hours a week, during a six-day work week. He averages $22,200 a year in salary and received an 8.2 percent increase in his wage during the last year. Approximately 38 years old, he has some college education. He is a





store manager, has worked 8.5 years in his current job and almost 12 years in the industry.

The average multi-department store respondent has worked 10 years in the industry, six of these in his current job. He is a store manager, has had some college education and is about 36 years old. He makes $27,500 a year—the most of any of the four categories—and received an 8.2 percent salary increase during the last year. He works 52.9 hours during a 5.6 day work week.

The average power equipment respondent, a store manager, is 48 years old—the oldest of the four categories. He works more each week than respondents in the other categories, as well: 55.9 hours a week, 6.2 days a week. Making $23,600 a year, his most recent salary increase was 10.4 percent. After receiving some college education, he has worked in the industry 17.8 years, 14.3 in his current job.

The average garden center respondent has worked in the industry for 12.8 years, 7.8 in his current job. He is a store manager, possibly a college graduate—one in 10 has a master's degree—and about 35 years old. His salary increase during the last year was 8.2 percent, and his salary level is at $22,200 a year. He works 52.1 hours during a 6.2 day work week.

What do these "average" profiles say about our industry? They indicate that, despite the long hours and the low pay, men and women in this industry get a great deal of satisfaction out of what they do and will stick with it, despite an overabundance of disadvantages.

What makes it all worthwhile

To support such statements, one multi-department store respondent said this about working in the industry: "(It is a) time of much change in an 'over-stored' country. Pressures of declining work force, recession and ultra competition make the growing rough. But, what a great business to be in!"

And, according to another, "As the owner of an independent sales and service shop, I find the hours long, monetary gains average, problems many. But the rewards of knowing that what I've achieved I've done myself; (it) is very satisfying."

The negative vs. the positive

Comments to the contrary, however, cannot be dismissed. Complaints and cries for help were abundant. One power equipment dealer said simply, "Too much competition for small dealer to make a decent living in lawn and garden equipment only. I'm getting out."

Another said, "(It's) not possible to make a living as a retail nursery employee. Too much of the nursery business is going to large department store chains. We can't compete!"

Another complained, "Opportunities are great, but, overall, pay could be better for all in the nursery business. (We) should educate the public toward those who specialize in service...Also look toward computers and videos to educate, while not detracting from personal customer service. Independent nurseries are finding it more difficult to compete with high volume, low price discount chains."

And another disconcerting plea, "There is very little opportunity in this industry after a store manager position...All that is left 'to climb the ladder' is to leave and open your own business. Many—most—nurseries are small, family-owned businesses with little opportunity for advancement. As a horticulturist, with a B.S. degree, I consider myself lucky to have even found a job in this market."

The top 10 benefits received:

1. **paid vacation**
2. **paid holidays**
3. **paid medical insurance**
4. **paid sick leave**
5. **company-paid attendance at trade meetings/shows**
6. **paid life insurance**
7. **bonus**
8. **vehicle for personal use**
9. **paid disability insurance**
10. **(tied) paid association membership and personal business days**

Source: October 1987 *LGM* questionnaire. Based on 227 respondents.

That this person found it difficult getting a job seems to be a contradiction of what others in the industry are saying; these industry employers deplore the lack of quality, educated help. "No interest among students in entering the field anymore," said one garden center respondent in the Northeast. Another said, "Low pay and seasonal work make it hard to attract and keep good people."

And for those already in the industry, the outlook isn't much better. A landscape architect in Pennsylvania was even more despondent. "Depending on what area you are in, and the size of the company you work for, your salary is too low for the experience one has. I think this holds true everywhere in the country. I would not steer anyone to this profession (unless) as a last resort."

Feeling good about what you do

But what does the industry hold for those who can stick it out and remain

continued...

in the running? Perhaps a great deal of satisfaction, for one. Don Mayberry Jr., a vice president at his family-owned Mayberry Sales & Service, Port Murray, N.J., says he's never thought about any other profession. "I've grown up with it; I love it," he says. He admits that he sees more room for profit, but he says that's true in any business. As to what makes his job a satisfying one, he says, "I work on a one-on-one customer basis. I try to be as honest as I can, which makes for a good customer rapport. People come back to our store because of the service." That makes him feel good, he says.

Others in the industry are satisfied as well. Not only do they enjoy what they do, but the fringe benefits aren't bad either. According to the *AD* survey, a majority of Americans are satisfied with the benefits they receive, such as vacation, sick leave and health plans. This supports *LGM's* results, as well, where few respondents answered the question, "What non-salary benefit that you *don't* have now would you like most?"

As to the benefits employees *do* receive, 85 percent of the respondents said they receive a paid vacation each year, of about 13.6 days a year. And more than two out of three respondents said they receive paid sick days—the median number was 8.2 days a year. More than three out of four also receive paid holidays, about 6.7 days a year.

Some differences were evident among the different segments of the industry as to the benefits they receive. For example, dental insurance was not paid for a majority of the respondents, except for those working for multi-department stores, where nearly half received it. The findings were similar as to those respondents who said they are involved in a stock purchase plan: 28.6 percent of the multi-department store respondents said they receive such a benefit, but only 6.5 percent of garden centers, 10.6 percent of hardware/home centers and 6.4 percent of power equipment respondents did.

More multi-department respondents had an employee savings plan, too: 23.8 percent compared to 6.5 percent of garden centers, 7.6 percent of hardware/home center and 1.6 percent of power equipment respondents. More garden center and multi-department store respondents received a tuition reimbursement plan than the other categories also.

Can age be a factor in job happiness?

Statistics in the *AD* study suggest that age is a significant factor in whether people are satisfied with their jobs. According to that survey, young people are the least satisfied with their work—only 13 percent of people younger than age 25 said they are "most" satisfied with their work. Twenty-five percent of workers age 45 to 65 said they were "most" satisfied.

However, according to the comments made by *LGM* respondents, age has little to do with being satisfied—at least in the lawn and garden industry. In the 25 to 34 age group, respondents were about split as to whether they believed this to be a good industry in which to work. Of the few respondents under the age of 25, most had positive comments to make about the trade. A department manager in Ohio, under the age of 25, for example, said, "The lawn and garden industry is growing each year," leading one to believe that this employee sees ample opportunity for advancement and success. Another respondent under age 25, an assistant store manager for a garden center in Michigan, said, "(There are) many opportunities to move up."

Years in the industry

About one out of four of the respondents has been in the industry from 15 to 24 years—a majority of the respondents. The median number of years that respondents had worked in the industry was 13.8. Out of the four categories of respondents, the hardware/homecenter stores employed personnel who have been in the industry the longest—one out of five of their employees have worked in lawn and garden for more than 25 years. The power equipment category has nearly that many.

More than 20 percent of the respondents have worked in their present jobs from five to nine years. The median number of years in a current job was 9.6.

The median hours worked each week is 53. People in the power equipment aspect work the most hours, about 56 hours a week, while hardware/homecenter respondents work 52. Nearly one in three respondents work 60 or more hours per week. Fewer than one in 10 work a regular, 40-hour week.

A Monday through Saturday workweek is the norm. Most respondents work six days a week. Only about one in five work a regular, 40-hour, five-day work week. One in 10 work more than six days a week.

What it's worth in dollars and cents

Salary is the area where most of the respondents had complaints—not unlike the rest of employed Americans. Only 42 percent of Americans are happy with their paychecks, and more than one in four say they are dissatisfied with them, according to the *AD* survey.

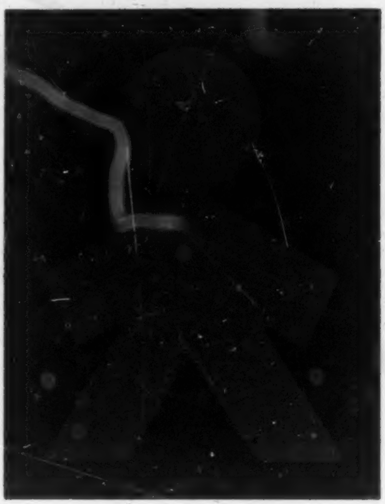
Comments from retailers responding to the *LGM* questionnaire reflect such dissatisfaction. In a nation where law school graduates are going out and pulling in from $50,000 to $100,000 in

continued...

The five most desired benefits:

1. paid dental insurance
2. pension plan
3. vehicle for personal use
4. paid medical insurance
5. profit-sharing plan

Source: October 1987 LGM questionnaire. Based on 227 respondents.



Payoff...*continued*

their first year, many employees in the lawn and garden industry are making an average of $23,000 after spending most of their careers in the field—even those with graduate degrees.

However, this wage still is higher than the national average for a retail trade employee. According to the *Monthly Labor Review*, October 1987, the average total compensation for an employee in the retail trade—including all benefits—is $7.85 an hour. That is $16,328 annually.

Comparatively, the average household income in 1985 was $28,742, according to information from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. And, for even greater comparison, take a look at what the average chief executive officer averages annually: $473,500, according to a survey of 1,000 Fortune 500 executives by the executive search firm Heidrick and Struggles. These executives work an average of 61 hours a week and take fewer than three weeks' vacation a year, though most of them receive a benefit package that includes four weeks' vacation a year.

Though such executives may work hours that are just as long as the employees in this industry, and make sacrifices as well—such as giving up one week's vacation a year—it is still difficult not to become dejected at the thought of such staggering sums of money—especially for the retailer who may come into contact with people who make such sums everyday. One respondent to the *LGM* questionnaire, for example, described his dismay with the owners of the hardware/home center store at which he manages a lawn and garden department.

"I am sad for the amount of money this homecenter brings in compared to the amount of money I make," he says. He says that despite the high-dollar sales he has brought to the business while he has been manager, he has not been able to convince the owners to put him on commission. At $8 an hour, he can make about $20,000 a year by working extra overtime. He doesn't feel like he is being given a fair shake, considering his 13 years of experience, he says.

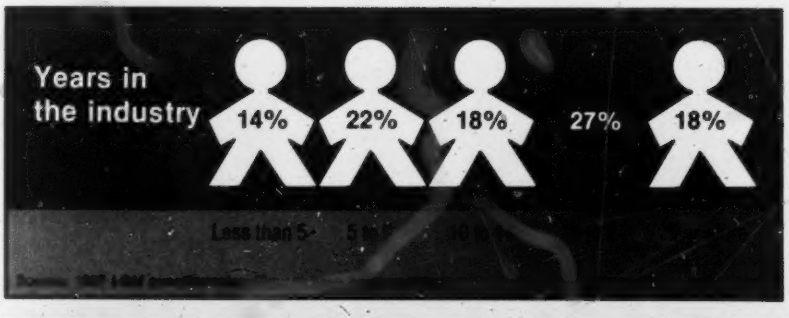
"I see them drive around in their Mercedes, while I can barely find the money to tune-up my old truck," he complains.

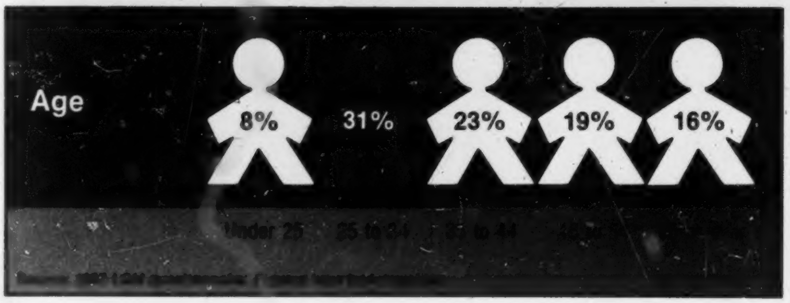
Unlike this employee, who only got a 6.7 percent raise last year, almost half of the respondents said they received a salary increase last year of 9.3 percent. Seventeen percent said they received increases from 5 to 9 percent, and 15 percent received increases from 10 to 14 percent.

Making a formal education pay off

Does the amount of education an employee has received have anything to do with how much money he or she makes? According to respondents of the *LGM* survey, evidently not. Several complaints from respondents about low pay were from those who had college degrees, some of whom even had post-graduate degrees.

Most of the respondents to this survey





had some college. More than one in four graduated from high school, and more than one in three graduated from college. One in 10 had post-graduate school training.

Going for broke

So despite what appears to be an occupation filled with long days, short weekends and low paychecks, some aspect of the job must be appealing to people to stick it out, go for broke. Perhaps it is the opportunities for the future. One professor at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass., thinks the industry is bright.

John Stilgoe, a senior professor in the department of landscape architecture at Harvard, teaches classes to some 200 students each year, all of whom will eventually go into the lawn and garden industry, including retail. Stilgoe admits that the lawn and garden industry is one in which people must work long hours to stay ahead. But, he says, there *is* hope for the future. He predicts that as the planet becomes more crowded, gardening—vegetable gardening in particular—will become much more important. "The lawn care industry is going to have to think of itself as a more inclusive industry," he says.

"The changes won't be fixed in a month," he says, but long term changes are going to make lawn and garden a much more thriving and prosperous industry.

For example, he points out, residents of condominium communities may start to become more involved in the landscaping of their rental properties. They may begin to want to do some of it themselves, rather than leaving it all to be handled by condominium owners' landscape contractors.

Also, other reasons, especially economic ones, will spur people to become more involved in their personal pieces of property. "Cost of vegetables will increase as the cost of suburbanization increases," he points out. Thus, he sees people becoming involved in vegetable gardening to save money—just as they did 15 years ago.

Other concerns will lead people to garden more as well. "People are becoming more concerned about the pesticides and herbicides that have been sprayed on their fruits and vegetables (in other countries). So their response may be to grow their own vegetables," he says. The desire for more quality vegetables will give rise to more gardening also. In Massachusetts, he cites as an example, golden peppers are in high demand. They sell for $6 per lb., however, and are imported from Holland. "They can be grown here, though," he says. So people may turn to gardening to satisfy culinary desires.

A bright future

Thus, despite some of the disadvantages that the industry holds, Stilgoe offers an optimistic picture for the years ahead. "I think the future looks much brighter," he says. "Over the 20-year period, it is extremely optimistic."

Others in the industry must recognize such opportunities as well. A garden center respondent from the West, for example, had a very optimistic attitude.

That person said, "The lawn and garden industry is one of the most exciting growth potential industries...The industry offers travel worldwide. (There is) satisfaction in helping (people) achieve success with their plants." And as far as why anyone would want to stick with this industry, perhaps this respondent says it best. "It's a long, hard road to wealth in the lawn and garden business—but a very satisfying occupation." —LGM

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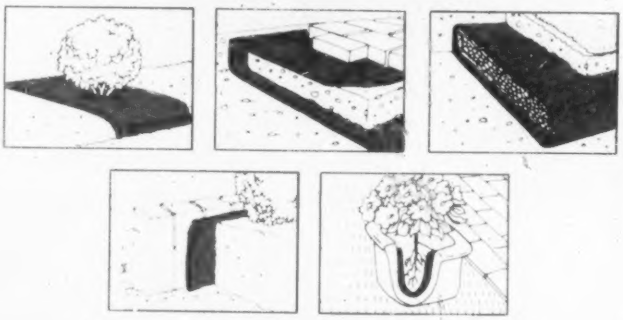

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Green Scene

Lawn & garden strong in grocery stores

The 40th annual Consumer Expenditures Study conducted by *Supermarket Business* magazine indicated lawn and garden product sales were strong in grocery stores in 1986, according to the September 1987 issue of the magazine.

The survey was based on responses from manufacturers, processors, packers and marketers who deal with the more than 700 categories covered. These people answered a questionnaire, supplying industry-wide figures. The numbers were then cross-checked using secondary sources and scanning data.

The accompanying chart provides more detail about several specific lawn and garden products mentioned in the survey. Products like snow shovels, garden tools and supplies and lawn furniture are included in the general merchandise category. This category had sales of $845 million. However, other non-lawn and garden products like clocks, watches, scales, garbage cans and automotive supplies are also included in this figure.

1986 L&G product grocery store sales

	Total value retail sales* (in millions)	Retail grocery sales (in millions)
Pesticides	$532	$339
Floral	657	79
Wild bird seed	280	182
Barbecue grills	578	4
Garden seed packets	110	59

*All outlets
Source: *Supermarket Business*, September 1987.
Dollars rounded to nearest million.

Lebanon acquires Wondergro

Lebanon Chemical Corp., Lebanon, Pa., has acquired the Wondergro brand of turf and garden fertilizer and pest control products from W.R. Grace & Co., New York. Lebanon plans to continue sales of the line through major distributors located primarily in the Midwest. Negotiations are being completed to acquire the trademarks, brand names, packaging and inventory of Wondergro.

Wayne Christianson, formerly with W.R. Grace, will manage the brand sales of Wondergro.

Scotts reorganizes

Eleven months after becoming an independent company, The O.M. Scott & Sons Co., Marysville, Ohio, announced an organizational realignment. The changes were effective Dec. 1, 1987. Formerly grouped by function, Scotts sales and marketing departments will be realigned in separate retail and professional business groups. Each of the two groups will be headed by a general manager having full profit-and-loss responsibility.

Richard Stahl has been named general manager of the professional division. A retail division general manager will be appointed soon. In addition to marketing and sales, each division will have its own administration and finance personnel.

NMC builds 1988 ad program

The Nursery Marketing Council Steering Committee made three big moves to give their 1988 advertising more impact. First, NMC spokesman Willard Scott's contract was renewed for the 1988 calendar year. He will continue to appear in the print advertising to promote summer and fall planting. Second, the advertising will be produced in four-color instead of black and white. This decision was based on the fact that the product isn't black and white so the advertising should depict that. And third, the magazines used to deliver the message were streamlined to include the greatest number of current and potential users. The half-page ads will be placed in *Better Homes & Gardens, Sunset, Southern Living, Home* and *People* magazines.

Safer completes second financing venture

Safer, Inc., Wellesley, Mass., announced the completion of a $3.9 million private equity financing deal. Five million dollars in private financing was obtained in March 1987.

The participating investors include Plant Resources Venture Funds; Aeneas Venture Corp., an affiliate of Harvard University; Merrill Lynch Venture Partners; Citicorp Investment Management; Standish, Ayer & Wood, a Boston investment management firm; and Rockefeller & Co.

Briefs

- Stern's Miracle-Gro Products, Port Washington, N.Y., and Ortho Consumer Products, San Francisco, are co-producing a four-page advertisement to appear in the April issue of *Reader's Digest* magazine, half of which will deal with National Garden Week. The ad will reach more than 50 million potential gardeners and will appear with a gatefold. (See "Cultivating National Garden Week," page 6.)

- James P. Carroll has been appointed national sales manager for Reuter Laboratories Inc., Manassas Park, Va. He plans to build home and garden center and hardware store accounts. Norman D. Tuohy III also joined the sales team. As western divisional sales manager, he will cover a 13-state territory.

- The Professional Interior Plantscape Assn., a group of Southern California interior plantscapers, announced the 1988 board of directors. They are: president, Lydia Panaeri, Living Space,; vice president, Greg Eberly, Designer Greens,; secretary, Selma Morley, Van Herricks' Environmental Planting ; and director of finance, Steve McCurdy, British Indoor Gardens.

- The Lyndale Garden Center, Minneapolis, has been named Dealer of the Year by the Ringer Corp., Minneapolis. The national competition for the award, given for achieving the number one sales volume of Ringer products for a single outlet in 1987, was open to all dealers who sold the company's line of all-natural lawn and garden products.

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Lawn&Garden Marketing

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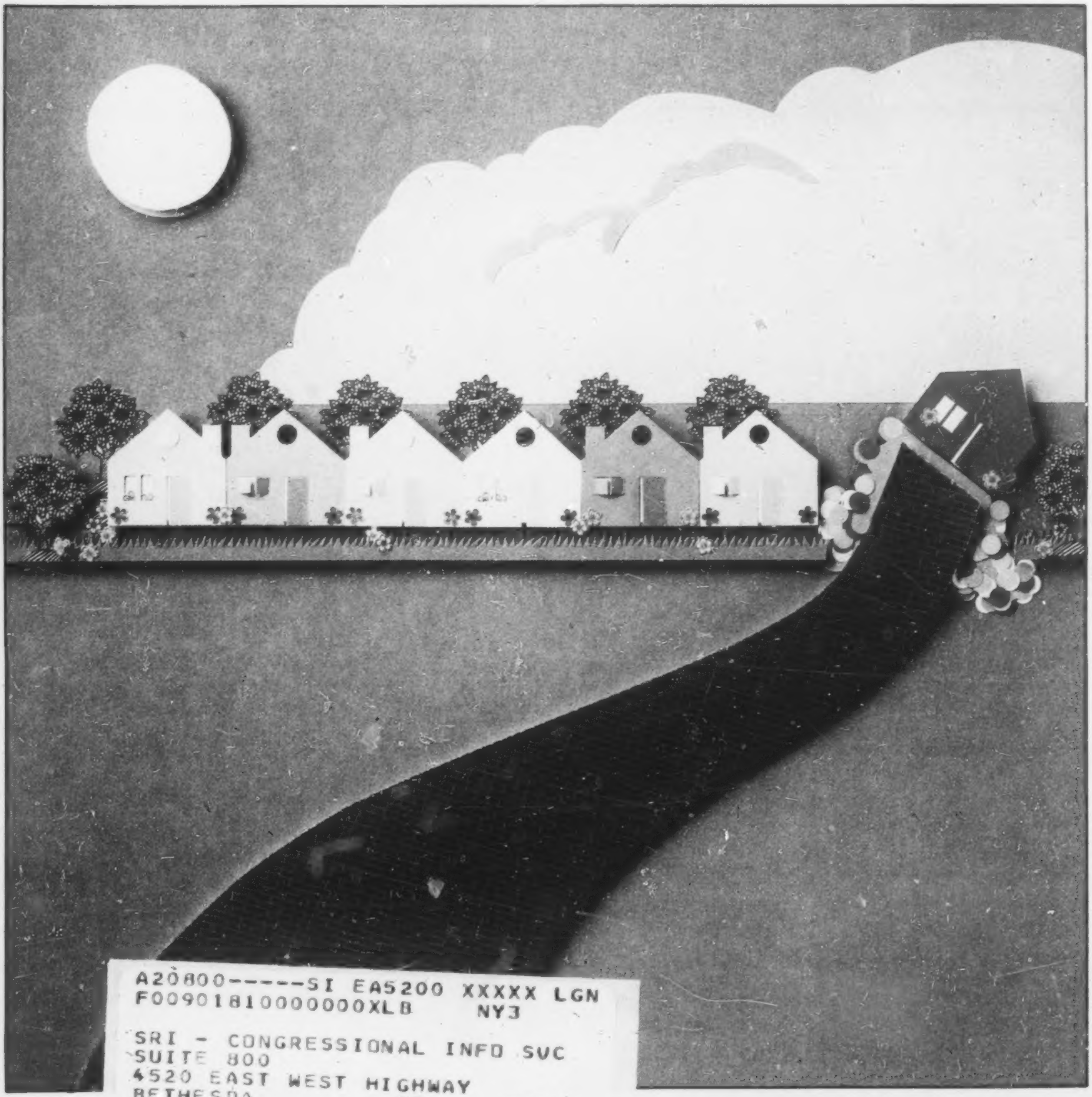
Cover story: Household L&G spending up

Electric lawnmowers • Speaking of Power



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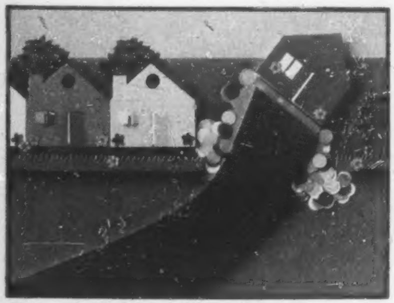
MARCH 1988 VOL. 27, NO.3 PUBLISHED 10 TIMES ANNUALLY



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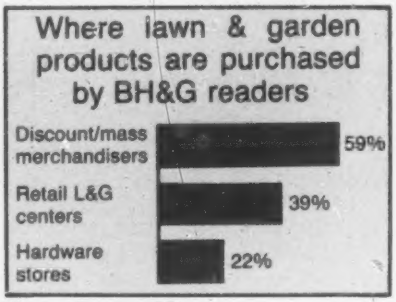

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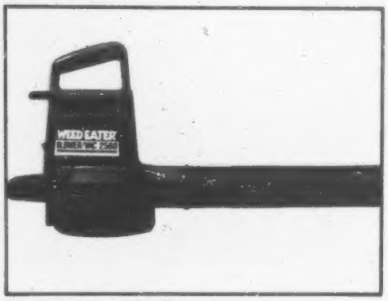

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From the Editor

What copycats they are; children mimic nearly every aspect of our daily lives. I have no doubt, for example, that because of my husband's and my interest in home improvement projects our children will grow up knowing how to repair things, how to renovate homes and how to landscape their yards. At five, our son already has gone through two sets of his own hand tools; he has his own miniature snow shovel and an imitation of Dad's self-propelled lawnmower (although his is a side-discharge and blows bubbles out the top). He even dressed up as a "handyman" for Halloween last year.

Toy marketers are brilliant promoters of this concept. They have long realized that children are imitators of adults, and they know exactly how to solicit children's interests to capture an adult's dollar. But children are not just imitators; they can be initiators as well. The toy people have a marketing strategy for this, too; it is perhaps best exemplified through the recent dinosaur rage. When I was a kid, dinosaurs were considered something only kids with pocket-protectors and thick glasses took an interest in. Today, children have an almost cult-like interest in the prehistoric creatures! Through brilliant marketing and promotional strategies, makers of dinosaur paraphernalia have been able to attract not only the attention of children, but the adult dollar as well: today, there are dinosaur sheets, wallpaper, posters, soap, books, pencils, place settings, blow-up toys, puzzles, computer software—the list is endless.

Of relevance here is that promoters have, in effect, obtained the interest of not just children, but parents, grandparents and teachers as well. Recently on a business trip to Washington, for example, I spent a couple of hours at the Smithsonian Institute's Museum of Natural History. I went to see the dinosaur exhibit because of my son's interest. The place was literally overflowing with school-age children who had gone to see the exhibit as well. The museum even encased a "DinoStore," where visitors could purchase souvenirs. (I bought a dinosaur stencil set, two pencils and a cup.)

Similarly, I think through a little effort and imagination, the lawn and garden industry could capture the attention of this young market. I think too many have overlooked this possibility, though the National Gardening Assn., Burlington, Vt., is one that has not. Through its Grow Lab program, sponsored by some industry majors, it has managed to find its way into school education programs and the interest has filtered into the children's homes as well. (See September 1987 *LGM*, page 22.)

On a smaller scale, retailers could promote the industry, while promoting their own products. Think about it. Why not with every X-brand snowshovel sold, give a child-size version free; with every X-brand rake, mower, trimmer, chainsaw, make the same offer. Why not encourage children to garden by donating seeds and peat pots to local elementaries (accompanied by take-home coupons for the parents). With a little imagination, the possibilities are endless. And the best byproduct of your effort is the potential involvement of a previously uninvolved parent. If we place too much emphasis on growing the market through the mature consumer only, we may not grow at all; we may miss out on a tremendous future opportunity.

Susan L. Anderson

Lawn&Garden Marketing

LAWN & GARDEN MARKETING Vol. 27, No. 3 (USPS 306-340) is published 10 times annually Jan-April, June-Nov by Intertec Publishing Corp., 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212, (913)888-4664. Second-class postage paid at Shawnee Mission, KS and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12942, Overland Park, KS 66212.

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Subscription information: Publication is mailed free in U.S. and Canada to qualified persons in retail/wholesale businesses responsible for buying and merchandising product lines and services related to landscaping, gardening, turf, patio, indoor plants and leisure living. Non-qualified subscriptions are $24 a year in the U.S./$30 in Canada and other countries. Foreign airmail optional at an additional $55 per year. Single copy price $2 plus postage and handling. Back issue price, $3 plus postage and handling. Adjustments necessitated by paid subscription termination at single copy rate. Allow 6-8 weeks for change of address or for new subscription processing. Subscription correspondence should be sent to P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the publisher's written permission.

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Household L&G spending up 20 percent

The annual National Gardening Survey shows consumer spending on lawn & garden increased by $3.2 billion in 1987. The study also described purchases by product category in more detail than ever before.

By **Bruce Butterfield,** *National Gardening Assn.*

Retail sales of lawn and garden products for 1987 totaled $17.4 billion, a 23 percent increase, or $3.2 billion over 1986 when consumers spent $14.2 billion, according to results of the 1987-88 National Gardening Survey conducted for the National Gardening Assn. by the Gallup Organization Inc. This is the second year that lawn and garden consumer sales have risen by more than $2 billion. In 1985, lawn and garden retail sales totaled $12 billion.

While the number of households participating in most types of lawn and garden activities stayed at about the same level from 1986 to 1987, the average amount of money consumers spent on most types of gardening activities increased significantly. Of the 15 categories of DIY lawn and garden activities measured in 1987, 14 had participation rates equal to that seen in 1986. However, the average amount of money consumers spent on each of these same lawn and garden activities in 1987 increased in 11 out of 15 categories.

The year 1987 also saw an increase in the average total that consumers spent for all lawn and garden activities. In 1987 consumers spent an average of $251, compared to $196 in 1986 and $159 in 1985.

An increase in total retail sales in 1987 was seen for lawn care, flower gardening, landscaping, indoor houseplants, flower bulbs, tree care, ornamental gardening, growing berries, shrub care, raising transplants and herb gardening. A decrease in total retail sales in 1987 was seen for vegetable gardening, insect control, container gardening and fruit trees.

The lawn and garden categories showing the most growth during 1987 over 1986 included ornamental gardening (perennials and roses), raising transplants, growing berries, tree care, indoor houseplants and landscaping. Above average growth in 1987 was also seen for lawn care and shrub care. And there was slightly lower, yet significant, growth rates in retail sales in 1987 for flower gardening, herb gardening and flower bulbs.

Who spent the most on lawn and garden during 1987? The key demographic groups for lawn and garden retail sales in 1987 included men (58 percent of sales), 30 to 49 year olds (49 percent of sales), college-educated households (56 percent of sales), professionals (30 percent of sales), business people (21 percent of sales) and households with manual labor occupations (27 percent of sales).

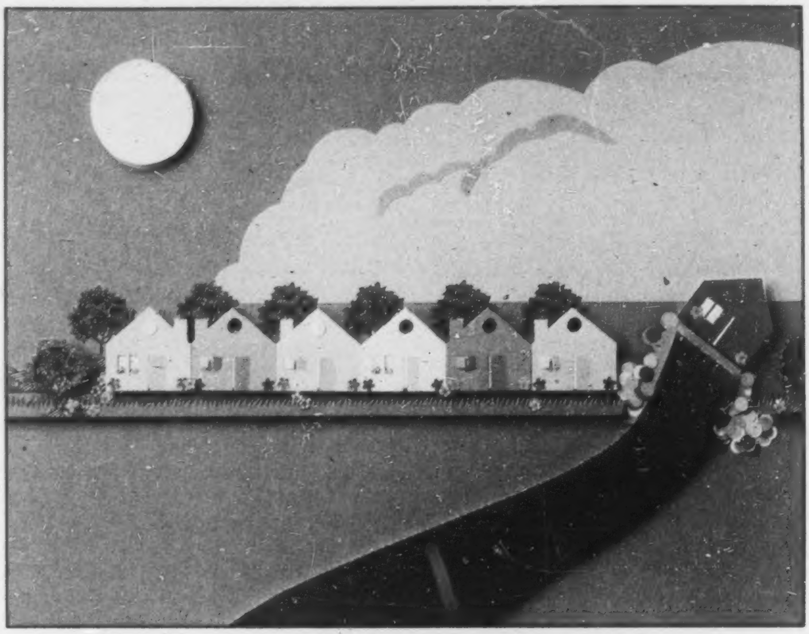
Other key demographic groups for lawn and garden retail sales last year were households with annual incomes of $40,000 and up (46 percent of sales) and rural households (32 percent of sales).

Regionally, 25 percent of lawn and garden sales in 1987 were in the East, with 6 percent in New England and 19 percent of sales in the Mid-Atlantic states. Twenty-three percent of lawn and garden sales were in the Midwest, with 14 percent in the East Central

Average $ spent per household

Activity	1986	1987	$ Change
Lawn care	$92	$113	+$21
Landscaping	145	183	+38
Flower gardening	41	49	+8
Vegetable gardening	41	45	+4
Tree care	61	89	+28
Indoor houseplants	27	36	+9
Shrub care	40	46	+6
Insect control	36	39	+3
Flower bulbs	26	25	−1
Fruit trees	38	29	−9
Raising transplants	18	30	+12
Ornamental gardening	46	91	+45
Growing berries	15	22	+7
Container gardening	34	33	−1
Herb gardening	10	10	0
TOTAL	$196	$251	+$55

Source: National Gardening Assn./Gallup Organization



states and 9 percent in the West Central states. Twenty-nine percent of lawn and garden sales were in the South, with six percent in the Deep South and 19 percent in the rest of the South. And twenty-three percent of lawn and garden sales were in the West, with 6 percent in the Rocky Mountain states and 19 percent of sales in the Pacific states.

The new 1987-88 National Gardening Survey includes a much more detailed and in-depth look at the lawn and garden products that consumers purchased in 1987 than it has in previous years. In total, consumers were asked about which of more than 100 specific types of lawn and garden products they purchased. The table below summarizes the lawn and garden products purchased in 1987 by category. In total, 93 percent, or 65 million, of U.S. households involved in lawn and garden activities purchased one or more lawn and garden products in 1987.

Where did consumers purchase lawn and garden products in 1987? As the table at right indicates, Garden Center/Retail Nursery was the retail outlet where most consumers purchased lawn and garden products. Following Garden Center/Retail Nursery in terms of the households that purchased products at that retail outlet were Hardware Store, Mass-Merchandiser/Discount Store, Feed/Seed Store, Supermarket/Drug Store, Home Center and Mail-Order. —LGM

Lawn and garden product	1987 Households purchasing %	1987 Households purchasing MM
Nursery products	52	36
Indoor plants & supplies	50	35
Insect controls/chemicals	45	32
Fertilizer	45	32
Seeds	45	32
Pet/wild bird products	45	32
Watering equipment	39	27
Outdoor living/barbecue	38	26
Garden hand tools	37	26
Soil amendments/mulch	32	22
Power equipment	25	18
Food preservation	25	18
Plant containers/pots	14	10
Gardening information	13	9
Lawn/landscape services	9	6
None	7	5

Retail sales in 1987

Activity	1986 $ Bil.	1987 $ Bil.	Change $ Mil.	% Change
Lawn care	$4.317	$5.449	+$1.132	+26.2%
Landscaping	2.176	2.921	+.745	+34.2
Flower gardening	1.519	1.777	+.258	+16.9
Vegetable gardening	1.363	1.253	−.110	−8.0
Tree care	.845	1.253	+.408	+48.2
Indoor houseplants	.826	1.105	+.279	+33.7
Shrub care	.659	.840	+.181	+27.4
Insect control	.992	.979	−.013	−1.3
Flower bulbs	.431	.456	+.025	+5.8
Fruit trees	.382	.292	−.090	−23.5
Raising transplants	.131	.249	+.118	+90.0
Ornamental gardening	.166	.471	+.305	+183.7
Growing berries	.050	.095	+.045	+90.0
Container gardening	.310	.305	−.005	−1.6
Herb gardening	.039	.046	+.007	+17.9
TOTAL	$14.206	$17.491	+$3.285 billion	+23.1%

Source: National Gardening Assn./Gallup Organization

Lawn and garden retail outlet	1987 Households purchasing %	1987 Households purchasing MM
Garden center/retail nursery	44	31
Hardware store	30	21
Mass merchandiser/ discount store	21	15
Feed/seed store	19	13
Supermarket/drug store	15	11
Home center	16	11
Mail order	8	6
Other	3	2

The 1987-88 National Gardening Survey, on which this article is based, provides detailed marketing information on the who, what, where, when and why of lawn and garden retail sales. Each year the National Gardening Assn. publishes the results of the Survey in a comprehensive 300 page report. For more information contact the NGA at 180 Flynn Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401; (802) 863-1308.

Better Homes and Gardens consumer panel reveals L&G preferences

A 1987-88 *Better Homes and Gardens* Consumer Panel survey of subscribers found that the majority of the respondents, 59 percent, purchase lawn and garden products at discount/mass-merchandiser stores such as K mart or Wal-Mart. About 39 percent shop at local retail lawn and garden centers, and 22 percent shop at hardware stores.

These results are from a survey of a specific segment of *BH&G* readers but are not necessarily typical of consumers as a whole. (See "Household L&G spending up 20 percent," page 4.) The demographic breakdown of the respondents revealed a median age of 43 years, which is in line with the national average of 44 years. The median household income of the respondents was $38,946, which was much higher than the national average of $28,421. Eighty-three percent of the respondents were married.

Forty-two percent of the respondents said they would purchase or have purchased lawn and garden items to give as Christmas presents, and 35 percent said these purchases had been planned. Five percent said such purchases had been impulsive, and 59 percent said it was a combination of both.

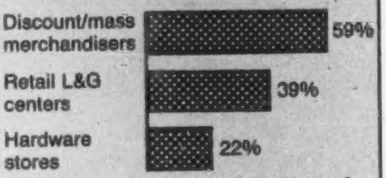
"Quality" ranked as the most important factor when shopping for such products, based on mean scores. Price followed as next important, then variety of product selection, advice on how to use the product and general gardening advice from the store.

More than half, 58 percent, usually read the gardening advice column in their local newspaper.

As for specific products, nearly 50 percent purchase fertilizers and plant foods at the same time and place in which they purchase plants, flowers, trees, etc. About 48 percent do not. Nearly 69 percent said they use a hose and sprinkler to water their lawns, about 19 percent use only a hose, 12.5 percent use a sprinkler system and about 5 percent have a hose and sprinkler with a timer.

In the survey, respondents were told to consider "lawn and garden products" as gloves, burlap barriers, garden/yard fencing, mulch, rakes, prunes, sprayers, spreaders, hand-held power tools, fertilizer, indoor plant-related items, nursery stock, patio items, pesticides, soil enhancers and watering products. Outdoor power equipment products were not included.

Where lawn & garden products are purchased by BH&G readers*



*Based on respondents to *Better Homes & Garden's* Consumer Panel survey of subscribers. Multiple answers were chosen by some respondents.

GCA members told they could be held liable

Members of Garden Centers of America were warned that if they give erroneous information over the telephone to poison control centers they could be sued for malpractice, according to attorney John P. Manwell.

Manwell says GCA members should never try to identify a plant over the phone, and even when shown the actual plant, leaf or fruit, they should not give advice unless that they are confident their identification is absolutely correct. Members also should check with insurers about coverage on such a liability.

GCA has developed a "poison plants" kit to assist members in providing information on plant safety to customers. Members may receive the kit by calling GCA at (202) 789-2900.

True Temper wins POP award

True Temper, Shiremanstown, Pa., is a winner in the Point of Purchase Advertising Institute's Outstanding Merchandise Achievement awards. The company was presented with the award after competition that took place last November. More than 50 categories were entered by the 1,200 entrants, most of whom were the producers and suppliers who designed the promotions and displays.

True Temper's display was intended to set it apart from the normal clutter in the garden tool section at many stores. A silver background with black accent lines defines the display, and pre-punched holes are set for specific product hooks and racks. The header attaches to the pegboard with standard peg hooks.

Briefs

- Pennington Enterprises Inc., Madison, Ga., has purchased 10 acres in Lebanon, Ore., with the option of 20 more acres for future expansion. A Northwest seed production and packaging facility will be built on the land. The facility will have high-speed packaging capabilities and will blend and package seed. In other news at the company, Pennington has purchased an interest in Cactus Seed Inc., Roll, Ariz. Cactus Seed operates a bermuda grass seed processing plant.

- Stim-U-Plant, Columbus, Ohio, has appointed the following new sales representative firms: P.S.M. Inc., Glenview, Ill., serving Wisconsin and Illinois; SKU Marketing of Cincinnati, serving Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky; Missouri Sales Inc., of St. Louis and Kansas City, Mo., serving Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas.; and A.R. Strouth Manufacturers Representatives, Minneapolis, serving Minnesota.

- Aeroxon Products Inc., New Rochelle, N.Y., is changing its name to Roxide International Inc. The company says that the new name will better identify the company's diverse product line, although the Aeroxon name will continue to be used with the fly paper product on which the company was first founded to produce.

- Duraco Products Inc., Streamwood, Ill., has opened a 100,000-sq.-ft. warehouse at the company's headquarters. The new building doubles warehouse space for Duraco's Garden Scene^{R} plant-erware.

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Lawn&Garden Marketing™

APRIL/MAY 1988

An Intertec publication

Cover story: Selling snowthrowers

Pesticide choices • Trim-a-tree sales

April
18
MONDAY
19
TUESDAY
Call Bob
Order '88-'89 Snowthrowers
20
WEDNESDAY
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THURSDAY
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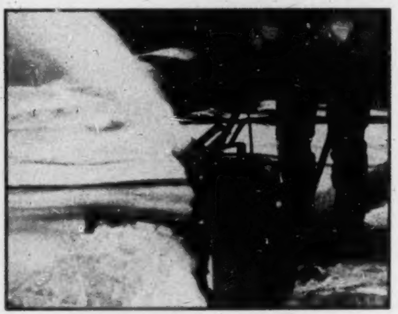
PUBLISHED 10 TIMES ANNUALLY
APRIL/MAY 1988
VOL. 27, NO. 4

Lawn&Garden Marketing™

The merchandising magazine for lawn, garden and leisure living products.

Worth a Look, 6

Trim-a-tree sales, 18



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Cover design by Linda Pokorny. Cover photo by Kevin Anderson. Snowthrower photo courtesy of Ariens. "From the Editor" photo by Kevin Anderson.

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Did you know?

Two out of every three households (67 percent) own at least one type of outdoor power equipment. Of these, 49 percent own a gas-powered walk-behind, 28 percent own a chainsaw and 23 percent own a power string trimmer.

Source: OPEI/1987-88 National Gardening Assn. annual survey by the Gallup Organization

Postmaster: Return form 3579 to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12942, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.
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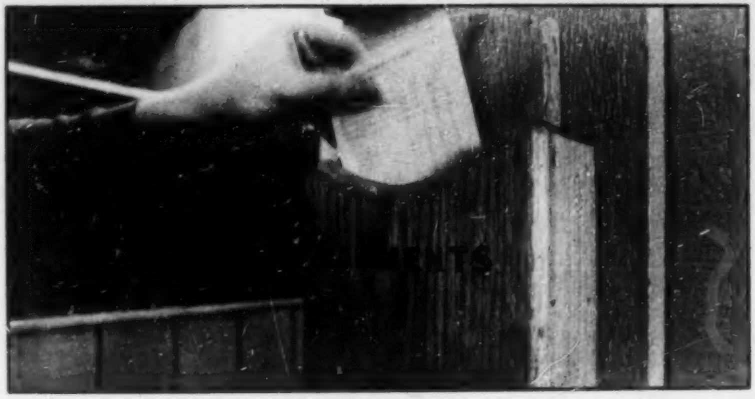
From the Editor



The *non*complainer is the one who shops your store, can't find any sales personnel on the floor to assist him or explain a product's use, stands in line for 10 minutes only to be told by your cashier that she is now closed, and when he gets through another line and is asked casually by the cashier, "Did you find everything OK?" mutters simply, "Yes."

The *non*complainer doesn't complain to you for three reasons: first, you don't provide him with a proper forum in which to complain (the line is six customers deep and those behind him don't want to hear his complaint, nor likely, does the cashier); second, it takes more of an effort to complain than not to complain; and third, he believes the complaint will not be acted on (surely store management is already aware that customers are standing in long lines and that personnel is absent from the sales floor). But the fact that he does not complain is unfortunate for you, because it decreases the odds of him returning to your store.

At a recent industry conference, Larry Helms, president of In-House Training in Oregon, discussed human behavior in his seminar, "Customer Service: How to Get, Serve and Keep Clients." He showed how nonexpressed complaints are in direct correlation to a loss in customers: only 9 percent of all *non*complainers with a major complaint (involving more than $100) will return to your store and 37 percent of *non*complainers with minor complaints (involving less than $5) will return to your store. Yet, 19 percent of those who *do* express a major complaint and another 46 percent who express a minor complaint *will* return to your store even though that complaint has not been resolved.

In other words, only one in 10 *non*complainers with a major problem will shop your store again, but one in five complainers with a major problem will continue to shop your store even though you have not resolved the problem! To make matters worse, *non*complainers complain to others, even though they don't to you. For every one complaint you receive, 26 others have complained about you to others; 20 of those are minor complainers who will tell four others; six of those are major complainers and will tell 20 others. In short, 200 people know of a complaint about your store.

*Non*complainers are costly to your business, which is why you should make every effort to get complaints. Encourage personnel to seek complaints; offer a "suggestion" box, visible at checkout and complete with pencils and prewritten forms. Have a member of management discreetly request complaints when a customer appears unhappy; provide customers with a mail-in complaint form enclosed with purchases. Have signage reflect a message of "How can we serve you better?" And look at complaints positively: Complaints provide you with information you would not otherwise have had, give you the opportunity to correct a poor situation and, perhaps most importantly, may save you a customer.

A recent hotel I stayed in provided a form that began, "Help us implement your suggestions." It wasn't just saying, 'Fill out the form to get it off your chest." It was saying, "Let us know your comments so we may act on them." Now, isn't that a better way of asking, "Did you find everything OK?"

Susan L. Anderson

Lawn & Garden Marketing

LAWN & GARDEN MARKETING Vol. 27, No. 4 (USPS 306-340) is published 10 times annually Jan-April, June-Nov by Intertec Publishing Corp., 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212, (913)888-4664. Second-class postage paid at Shawnee Mission, KS and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12942, Overland Park, KS 66212.

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Feedback

Compiled by Gina Kellogg Hogan, *associate editor*

Many retailers were singing a happy tune during the 1987 Christmas sales season, at least according to the responses of the January *Lawn & Garden Marketing* questionnaire. Of the nearly 200 responses, an overwhelming majority indicated that they had experienced a "good to great" holiday sales season.

Even those garden center retailers who experienced some problems still remained upbeat after the season's end. Said one Northeast garden center respondent, "(Sales) went up over 200 percent. (But) we had one woman employee of seven years and one man of 28 years who stole over $14,000 in cash sales." Not the sort of thing most retailers would want to talk about. But even in the wake of such a catastrophe, this retailer remained cheerful about this season's sales.

Factors that influenced sales

Of those listing negative factors, more than anything else, fly-by-night live Christmas tree operations were complained of most. A Southern garden center respondent said, "Local civic clubs cut into sales considerably. They had 'free' tree lot on busy street: free labor, no taxes, no permits, etc. (It was) very unfair to the established business in our area." Cut-your-own-tree lots also were cause for complaint.

Despite the proximity of the season to October's stock market crash, few noted that it had had an effect on their season's sales. Most blamed other factors, such as the weather and discount/mass-merchandisers. A North Central garden center respondent said, "Lack of snow, I feel, hurt business the most. People just weren't in the mood." A Southern respondent wrote, "By the time our 'Open House' ad campaign started, the larger chainstores were advertising 40-50 percent discounts."

General observations

Some overall comments from retailers included:

Christmas is dying, since a high in 1985. Government takes Christmas out of schools, etc. Younger Uppies don't "do" holidays; they travel. Face it, American holiday traditions aren't tradition, they are booze, travel, luxury. No once a year items—*North Central*

We never saw a rush to where we would need traffic control. Mostly cash, very little on charge cards—*North Central*

People were willing to pay for whatever they wanted this year; very few Scrooges, despite Wall Street—*South*

The ability to pot live trees in fiber and wire basket combination for customer (made it a positive season)—*South*

Live B&B tree sales better than expected. Cut Christmas tree sales poor —*South*

More and more Christmas stores are opening in local malls just for the holiday season, which is impacting on ornament and other small items sales. However, artificial trees and wreaths still are getting the sales from customers wanting quality, not cheap prices—*West*

Think Black Monday made a conservative, traditional town stable but not enthusiastic—*West*

An abundance of suggestions

Retailers were eager to share their merchandising display tips, as well as to offer other suggestions on how to increase holiday season sales. From garden center respondents throughout the country came these suggestions:

- Put displays up early and keep them full and neat.
- Offer unusual merchandise, be different. Regular merchandise can be purchased in K mart or any food store.
- Emphasize live trees, wreaths, roping, holly and plants.
- Do not buy pre-decorated wreaths. Do them yourself.
- Poinsettias in masses move more plants. We doubled sales.
- People buy impulsively; they're overwhelmed by a great looking display.
- Do it first class or don't do it at all.
- Hit them with color and movement when they walk in the door.
- Display live trees on individual stakes.
- Everything used to decorate our sales room was priced and available for sale. For example, garland around doors, wreaths, hand-crafted ornaments on plantable Christmas trees.
- The more trees you display the better. We had 42 trees decorated and the two greenhouses full of fresh trees.
- Open packages of Christmas ornaments. Display items next to trees.
- Price inventory high enough to offer substantial discounts.
- Use lots of lighting. Light up a sample of every product that lights up.
- Make sure that the public knows you have a Christmas shop by sandwich boards, banners, etc., outside your store. So many times comments are made that "I never knew a garden center would have Christmas things."
- Use motion. A train display.
- Go all out. We used ceilings for vines, bark for winterscapes around trees, fountains, etc. We brought a professional in (to help with the displays).
- Items must be *on* trees—*out* of packages.

—LGM

Tops in '87 Christmas season sales

Product categories in which the most retailing respondents indicated sales increases in 1987 Christmas season sales compared to 1986:

Category	% of respondents indicating increases	Category	% of respondents indicating increases
*1. Poinsettias	49	6. Live trees	36
*1. Live wreaths	49	7. Ornaments	33
3. Garland sales	42	8. Artificial wreaths	29
4. Lights	39	9. Artificial trees	23
5. Tree stands	37	10. Christmas crafts	18

Source: *Lawn & Garden Marketing* January 1988 questionnaire. * tie

Retailers identify areas of anticipated growth

A new survey shows a high level of optimism among garden center retailers, who already are well into their '88 selling season.

By Charles W. Dunn, *editorial contributor*

Results of the first Trendnomics™ report, conducted by the Garden Center Institute, Atlanta, reveal some very positive attitudes among garden center retailers—attitudes that could help shape a profitable 1988 sales season.

Based on a carefully selected sample—of which more than 40 percent responded—the study's results provided a good business outlook for 1988. In fact, 75 percent of the respondents stated that they expected their '88 business to exceed '87 levels—at about 14 percent.

Although regional differences exist, the interest in color in landscaping continues to be the overall area of strongest anticipated growth. Nationally, retailers ranked that product category as the leading area of anticipated sales increase for 1988. (See table.)

Convenience products and services, groundcovers and vines, along with maintenance/planting services, are also anticipated to show strong '88 growth.

Since time constraints are a problem with most homeowners, many aggressive merchants and manufacturers of L&G products are attempting to simplify products' use and application. The overall market for convenience products is just now emerging in L&G and shows excellent potential for future growth.

Such positive attitudes for the future of the industry are key to increasing the level of consumer participation in lawn and garden activities for the 1988 season.

Data, prepared by Bruce Butterfield, research director at the National Gardening Assn., Burlington, Vt., clearly established that 1987 was the strongest growth year for retail sales of L&G products in the last decade. (See March 1988 *LGM*, "Household L&G sales up 20 percent.") With a plus 20 percent growth and a strong emerging market of young, affluent households, increased levels of anticipated growth can be expected during the coming year.

Although the industry has seen several years of double-digit sales increases, and retailers are anticipating another such year in 1988, the participation level of American households in L&G activities is stagnant. In fact, for the first time in several years, gardening fell from the No. 1 outdoor leisure-time activity to No. 2, following swimming.

For any real growth to continue in the future, the level of household participation must increase. Segments of this industry must develop a strategic approach to marketing—analyzing their individual products and messages to see if they meet the interest of the changing marketplace. They need also to identify and explore new distribution opportunities, as well as product line expansion and extension.

About the Garden Center Institute and Trendnomics™

The Garden Center Institute provides an integrated package of marketing, merchandising and management services relating to today's garden center industry. A non-political organization, unaffiliated with any association, its services are provided to retailers and suppliers on a subscription/sponsorship basis.

Twice yearly, after the spring and fall selling seasons, the GCI conducts detailed surveys of the garden center industry to determine product movement, trends and to project product and market outlooks.

Information for this article is from the fall 1987 survey conducted in January 1988. The survey consists of 71 tables, cross-referenced by region, dollar volume, number of locations and community size of garden center retailers in the country. Additional information includes retailer ratings of the effectiveness of various promotional tools, advertising mediums, vendors, factors effecting bottom line profits and their ranking of important considerations in the choice of a supplier.

Copies of the survey are available to non-members of GCI for $450. For more information, contact: The Garden Center Institute, P.O. Box 1264, Roswell, GA 30077, (404)587-2113.

Many retailers appear to be in tune to the opportunities of this strong marketplace. More than one-third of respondents indicated in the GCI survey that they plan to increase their advertising in 1988, on average of 15 percent. With the availability of innovative products to meet the market's demand, aggressive promotion and more varied shopping hours, retailers' early-season anticipation of an excellent selling year may well turn into reality. —LGM

Top 10 growth areas

Product categories—of which color plays an obvious part—where most of respondents anticipate 1988 sales growth are:

Product category	% of respondents anticipating growth
1. Annuals/transplants	80
2. Perennials	78
3. Flowering trees/shrubs	75
4. Shrubs	74
5. Goundcovers/vines	69
*6. Planting/maintenance services	68
*6. Christmas/trim-a-tree	68
*8. Cut flowers, florals, silks	67
*8. Trees	67
10. Fertilizer, soil amendments, mulch	63

Source: Garden Center Institute, January 1988 survey *tie

Charles W. Dunn is a marketing consultant and strategist based in Atlanta, specializing in the nursery and lawn and garden industry. With a decade and a half of experience in the industry he has provided services to many of the leading companies. He is the founder of, and a major contributor to, the Garden Center Institute.

Power Equipment Report

Townsend Saw Chain Co. changes name, introduces new products

The Townsend Saw Chain Co., Columbia, S.C., devoted a day to updating the press on the company's recent activities, including product demonstrations, factory tours and speeches by individual members of company management.

The company also unveiled a new name: Sabre Textron. The name change was the result of a "redirection and self analysis, leading toward new products," according to vice president/general manager Peter Finamore.

Textron has moved the saw chain operation from its Townsend division and made it an independent unit, operating within the Textron Consumer Products Group. The Townsend Saw Chain operation was started in 1971 as one of eight companies constituting the Townsend Division of Textron Inc.

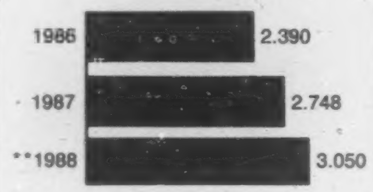
The company's new Sabre® Tooth™ blades preface the company's intentions of developing more products and accessories outside the chainsaw accessories field. The new products include a two-blade file pack, a Grasslasher, new bolt kits and lawn and garden tools—such as brushcutter/string trimmers and accessories—to be introduced before the International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo in Louisville, Ky., in July. The company also is marketing Fiskars products under the Sabre name in Europe. Plans at this time do not call for marketing these garden tools in the United States, however.

The company recently installed new cold-headed rivet manufacturing equipment, which Finamore says will enable the company to more closely maintain tolerances to produce stronger, more stress-resistant rivets. Other new equipment at the plant includes an advanced chrome-plating process, designed to extend the cutting life of the .404 pitch chain, and a "work-cell" assembly concept, which combines assembly with inspection. The company hopes to replace its grinders by year's end, also.

Portable power shipments are on the rise

Two of four portable power equipment categories saw increases in 1987, and all four are expected to increase in 1988, according to a survey of manufacturers by the Portable Power Equipment Manufacturers Assn. Gas-powered trimmers/brushcutters and gas-powered leaf blowers both experienced increases in the number of units shipped. Gas-powered chainsaws remained flat in 1987 and are expected to be flat again in 1988, as are gas-powered generators and backpack blowers.

Trimmer/brushcutter shipments*



Source: PPEMA

*Figures are based on millions.
**Figures for 1988 are projected.

Tecumseh introduces new line of rotary OHV engines

Tecumseh Products Co., Grafton, Wis., has introduced its first line of OHV engines for rotary lawnmowers, which the company says is the first to be engineered and manufactured in North America. This is the first foray for Tecumseh into this marketplace.

While several foreign-made OHV engines are available, Tecumseh says its model OVRM 40 outperforms the other engines in three individual areas: displacement, horsepower and torque.

The OVRM 40 is equipped with an automotive-type paper air filter, a 2-qt., no-rust fuel tank with large fill opening, easy access oil fill and dip stick and a sound-deadening muffler. Other features include electronic ignition, a mechanical governor to maintain engine power under heavier loads and a positive lubrication system that assures oil distribution at all operating angles.

Lawn-Boy moves national headquarters

Lawn-Boy has moved its national headquarters from Memphis, Tenn., to Plymouth, Wis., the former location of Gilson Bros. Co. offices. Lawn-Boy recently acquired certain assets of Gilson.

Approximately half of the employees in Memphis were asked to relocate to Wisconsin. The company also expects to hire additional people at the Plymouth location, which already employs 600 people.

Briefs

- A bill currently in front of the Kansas Senate calls for compensation from a supplier to a retailer when the supplier cancels a contract. The Kansas Outdoor Power Equipment Franchise Act would require any manufacturer, wholesaler or distributor who enters into a contract with a power equipment retailer to pay the retailer 100 percent of the net cost on all new and unused product in the event the supplier desires to cancel or discontinue the contract. The supplier would also pay the retailer an additional 5 percent of the net price of parts returned to cover the cost of packaging and shipping, among other costs that the bill covers.

- Tom Buckingham has been named director of technical services for Solo Inc., Newport News, Va. Tim Conrad has been named manufacturing operations supervisor. He will be responsible for the manufacturing operations of the company's Jetpack backpack sprayers. Donna Vander Werf has been named marketing assistant. David Longfield has joined the company as sales manager, chainsaws.

- Stephen G. Kaiser was named territory manager for the New England states for Dixon Industries, Coffeyville, Kan. His territory includes Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island.

- Lawn-Boy, Memphis, Tenn., named McKee & McRae, a Jackson, Miss.-based distributor, its Distributor of the Year. The award goes to the distributor who excels in all areas of Lawn-Boy sales, service, advertising and marketing. McKee & McRae won the award after increasing the Lawn-Boy market share in their area by more than 500 percent.

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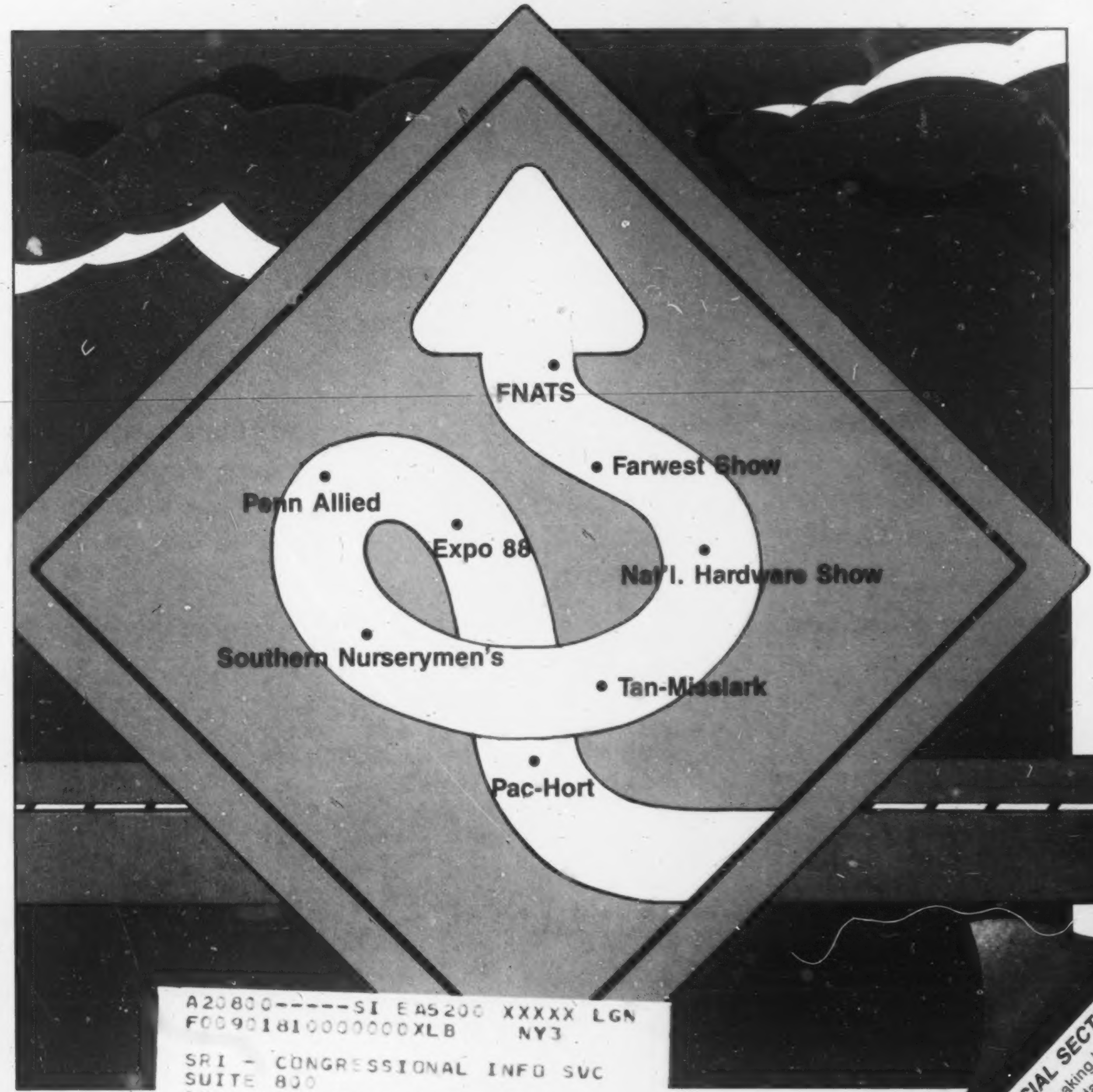
Lawn&Garden Marketing™

JUNE 1988

An Intertec publication

Cover story: Finding your way to the shows

Container gardening • Fertilizer update



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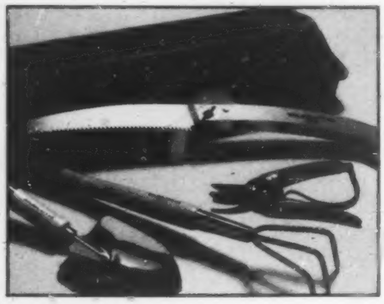
SPECIAL SECTION
OPEI making history today.
Page OPEI-1.

PUBLISHED 10 TIMES ANNUALLY
JUNE 1988
VOL. 27, NO. 5

Lawn&Garden Marketing™

The merchandising magazine for lawn, garden and leisure living products.



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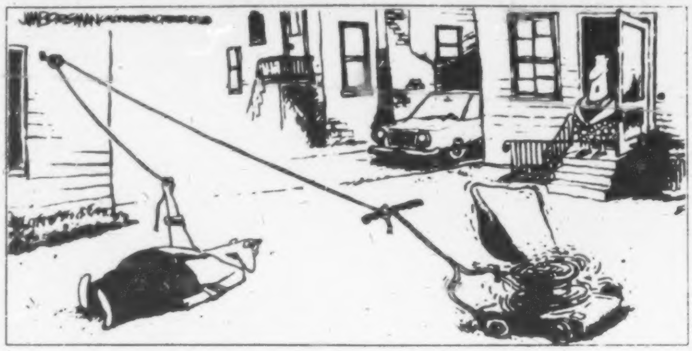
Did you know?

When consumers are looking for advice on gardening, 26 percent turn to friends and neighbors. But 25 percent look at the information on packages, another 25 percent look at seed packets, 22 percent go to the newspaper and 20 percent ask relatives.

Source: 1987-88 National Gardening Assn. annual survey by the Gallup Organization.

Lawn & Garden Marketing, Vol. 27, No. 5 (USPS 306-340) is published 10 times annually for $24 per year by Intertec Publishing Corp., 9221 Quivira Rd., Overland Park, KS 66215. Second-class postage paid at Shawnee Mission, KS and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12960, Overland Park, KS 66212. Copy right 1988 INTERTEC PUBLISHING CORP. All rights reserved.

From the Editor



"Oh, come on, Howard. The new tax form *can't* be that bad."

Reprinted with special permission of King Features Syndicate, Inc.

This editorial cartoon accompanied a syndicated column on what was then a fast-approaching tax deadline; the column ran on the Opinion page of the April 7 issue of my local evening paper. When I opened the page on which it appeared, I gasped.

My husband, who was sitting in the same room, looked concerned at my outburst. When I showed him the cartoon, I could tell by his expression that he clearly did not understand the seriousness of the depiction. I attempted to explain.

It is bad enough that such an incident involving a lawnmower be shown at all—I am certain that all OPE manufacturers and dealers across the nation are grumbling, "And that guy (in the cartoon) would probably still name me in his products liability suit." But to add further insult to injury, the cartoon was published in April, the month established by the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute as National OPE Safety Month! In short, the cartoon seemed to work against this industry's earnest efforts at promoting the safe use of power equipment products.

I don't doubt that many newspaper readers found it funny. In fact, I probably would have, too, under different circumstances. But I wanted to make a statement to somebody—I chose to make it to the artist.

His name is Jim Borgman, and I called him at his office at *The Cincinnati Enquirer;* I asked him simply, "What possessed you to use a lawnmower in the illustration? Why not show the man leaping from a window, jumping in front of a moving train or lunging from a cliff—obviously more cliche examples?" Borgman laughed. "Where were you when I was drawing it?" he said.

I explained to him who I was and why the cartoon was not likely to be found humorous to many in this industry: by those who had witnessed lawsuits against manufacturers of power equipment, by those who worked diligently with the Consumer Products Safety Commission to develop voluntary safety standards and safety testing procedures, by those who took power equipment seriously and, in fact, devoted millions of dollars and man-hours to protecting the safety of their end users—even those consumers actually stupid enough to pull a mower over themselves purposely!

I told Borgman that I wanted to understand what went into his thinking and to help him understand my feelings on the subject matter. "I could have used any of those examples you cited," Borgman explained. "I *could* have drawn a man jumping in front of a train. But I wanted to illustrate in a domestic environment the kind of frustration this kind of person would feel....Obviously, a moving train would not be nearby." Borgman said he believed that most people took it "in the spirit in which it was intended."

When I hung up, I knew I hadn't really accomplished anything; after all, he was just one person, one cartoonist. But I did feel better. And maybe, just maybe, next time he won't depict power equipment as a weapon.

Susan L Anderson

Lawn&Garden Marketing

LAWN & GARDEN MARKETING, Vol. 27, No. 5, is published 10 times annually Jan-April, June-Nov by Intertec Publishing Corp., 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212, (913) 888-4664.

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Subscription info: Publication mailed free in U.S./Canada to qualified persons in retail/wholesale businesses responsible for buying/merchandising product lines and services related to landscaping, gardening, turf, patio, indoor plants and leisure living. Non-qualified subscriptions are $24 a year (U.S) or $30 (Canada and other countries). Foreign airmail optional at extra $55/year. Single copy price $2 plus postage/handling. Back issue price, $3 plus postage/handling. Adjustments necessitated by paid subscription termination at single copy rate. Allow 6-8 weeks for address change or new subscription processing. Address subscription correspondence to P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.

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Address special requests to the publisher. ISSN 0031-4665: $2.00. Article copies, 16mm microfilm, 35mm microfilm and 105mm microfiche are available through University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Correspondence: Mail to 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212.

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ABP INTERTEC BPA

Don’t overlook the opportunities

Retailers who offer a variety of fertilizer products, and who take the time to understand and explain to consumers the differences between them, will profit.

By **Adele I. Rogers**, *editorial contributor*

Unlike pesticides, which often bring thoughts of work, fertilizers and related products connote the leisure side of gardening. And with 70 million households participating in lawn and garden activities in 1987, sales of fertilizer products have yet to reach their full potential. Because of the number and variety of products available, a tremendous opportunity awaits retailers who can cross-sell many of these products.

Traditionally, fertilizers have been made available in a multitude of formulas, in a variety of compositions and in an assortment of delivery systems; among these, the consumer picks the one he prefers. But today’s market offers more than a selection of products that results in a single purchase; good merchandising can lead to combination purchases.

Sorting out the choices

Here are just a few of the innovative product concepts that have recently emerged, as well as some old standbys that have undergone facelifts:

- The 120-year-old O.M. Scott & Sons Co., Marysville, Ohio, is very much the DIY lawn care leader it always has been. Senior marketing manager, Ashton Ritchie, says, “The new independent and entrepreneurial atmosphere at Scotts has yielded to more creative and aggressive marketing. New packaging, modified formulas and new product concepts have kept Scotts in the forefront, and while we feel that slow-release type lawn fertilizers are more effective, we also recognize that segment of consumers who prefer the newer hose-end liquid-feed type.”

Percentage of households purchasing a fertilizer product in 1987:

	Households purchasing	
Type of fertilizer	**%**	**Millions**
Dry/granular	28	19.6
Houseplant	25	17.5
Liquid or water soluble	19	13.3
Natural or organic/manure	16	11.2

Source: National Gardening Assn./Gallup Organization

Easy Care Liquid Lawn and Aqua Link watering tools are among the several line expansion products included in the company’s $20 million promotional campaign for ’88, which includes TV and radio advertising and rebate offers.

- Committed to slow release granules is Vigoro Industries, Fairview Heights, Ill. According to vice president, marketing, Ron Rimmer, “It is the most effective, environmentally safe and efficient type of fertilizer for broad-scale use.” After a successful West Coast market test, the company has introduced its new plastic bucket nationally. “Deep Green Plus packaging with its comfortable carrying handle is child proof and convenient to use,” Rimmer says, “and we are backing the product with the largest ad campaign—mostly spot TV—in Vigoro’s history.”
- The slow-release philosophy at A. H. Hoffman, Landisville, Pa., is similar to that of Vigoro’s; of its wide line of plant care products, a significant portion is organic. Marketing director Bill Dittman says, “The company maintains a position of marketing quality products that provide consumer satisfaction, selection, convenience and value, and that (philosophy) will contribute to the success of the entire industry.”

But the consumer who demands optimum performance is not the only one at retailers’ shelves; a large consumer base notes convenience as its priority. The introduction of hose-end liquids has helped unveil this new market segment, composed primarily of homeowners who have little time to cater to lawn, shrub or tree care.

Many manufacturers who were already in the water-soluble or indoor liquid plant food business have jumped into this new market, as have sprayer manufacturers, granular fertilizer producers and entirely new companies. Some of these companies and their products include:

- The No-Clog Feeder from Stern’s Miracle Gro, Port Washington, N.Y., a re-usable hose-end device, designed for economical water-soluble powder. President John Kenlon says, “So successful has been this concept that we introduced a 10-lb. plastic bucket with carrying handle, containing eight individual reload packets for the No-Clogs.” A $10 million ad budget will support the brand this spring.
- Giant Steps from Fertilizer Solutions, Lebanon, N.J., an odd-shaped clear-plastic tank with built-in measuring scale for even application;
- Greensweep—recently acquired from The Andersons, Maumee, Ohio, by Monsanto, St. Louis—the industry’s hose-end pioneers, with a variety of low-priced formulations; and
- Agro-Chem, Franklin Park, Ill., with its line of liquid natural/organic fertilizers and lawn treatments, which offer the consumer both a convenient and environmentally sound solution.

New market emerges

The tremendous expansion in this market proves that new product development certainly has not been limited to large scale application needs. New items and packaging options for houseplant and garden care have emerged to target these convenience-oriented consumers.

One such product is from Hyponex, Atlanta. Peter Durbetaki, marketing manager, says, “The ultimate in plant feeding convenience is our new effervescent tablet.” Individually foil-wrapped, the tablet takes about one minute to dissolve in a jug of warm water. No measuring is required, nor mixing, nor handling of fertilizer. The 3-oz. packets—a concept originally introduced several years ago by W.R. Grace, Cambridge, Mass., with its Peters Professional plant food line—are designed to attract first-time users. A $5 million ad campaign is supporting Hyponex this spring.

Optiflora Inc., Nashville, Tenn., entered the U.S. market and offered consumer convenience from the outset. What looks like sugar packets found in restaurants, Optimara soluble plant food is packaged in premeasured doses. The user simply tears the packet open, pours it in water and waits for it to dissolve.

Similarly, Peters introduced such a packet decades ago as a trial-size sample. Peters consumer marketing manager, Martha Shadan, says, "We have since aggressively promoted the concept" of attaching the trial-size packets as freebies on plants being sold. "It not only sells green goods," she says, "but leads to the purchase of Peters plant foods."

Value and high performance have always been the Peters product-development priority, according to Jack Peters, consumer product manager. But the convenience market wasn't about to be ignored at Grace and thus the birth of Peters Liquid. "There are two types of gardeners, and we've got products for both," Shadan says.

Another in this convenience category is Sierra's Osmocote, a controlled-release prilled plant food that combines the best of all worlds:

- it's convenient (no mixing or measuring, with infrequent application);
- it's safe (it won't burn plants or leach into soil and has a biodegradable resin coating);
- it's economical (depending on the formula, it lasts from 3 to 12 months); and
- it's high-performing (nutrients are available as plants need them, resulting in optimum growth and health maintenance).

Jay Rossi, vice president, marketing, says, "A stepped up spot TV and print ad campaign will tout Osmocote's unique features and benefits, and once the product is tried the repeat is very, very high."

Product expansion and broader market positioning have been the direction of many manufacturers.

- Clarel Labs, Deerfield, Ill., of Jungle Juice and Granny's Bloomers fame, promotes going the extra step with a foliar-feeding leaf shine called Ultimate;
- Dexol Industries, Torrance, Calif., offers a hose-end plant food for winterizing;
- Plant Research Laboratories, Laguna Hills, Calif., offers Oxygen Plus, which not only feeds plants but aerates soil and reduces overwatering; and
- International Spike, Lexington, Ky., with its Jobe's line—the father of plant care convenience with its spikes—now offers a liquid concentrate in a squeeze-meter bottle.

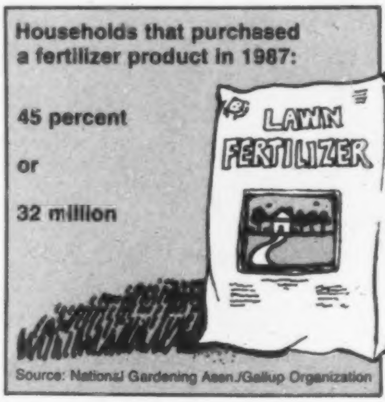
Sideline products add up for add-on sales

But there's more to plant care and to the packaged product category than fertilizers and pesticides. Several product categories that can complement the primary plant care product group include soil amendments, anti-transpirants, dethatchers and acidifiers. With more retailer and consumer education—and some creative merchandising—these products can present considerable money-making opportunities.

Thatch, the build-up of dead roots, decaying grass and sometimes chemical residues, is the major contributor to lawn disease and deterioration. Until recently, the only control was through mechanical means. But research has produced an easier, more effective way to eliminate the condition: from Phoenix, Ariz., Sudbury's D-Thatch and, from Minneapolis, Minn., Ringer's Restore. Each product performs about the same function, the former being a liquid self-mix, the latter a slow-release granular and both containing all natural, safe, non-toxic materials.

Consumers often assume that fertilization and pest control is what leads to a healthy lawn, but in the long term, these can actually contribute to an opposite effect. As Rob Ringer, director of sales development at Ringer Corp., puts it, "Chemicals take out of the soil, but don't put into it. A healthy lawn or garden begins with enriched soil, and that's what Restore will provide. With heavy thatch build-up, air, water and nutrients are not made available to the plant, and that's when problems surface. Ringer Restore products not only provide the necessary micro-organisms and enzymes to decompose thatch, but act as both a disease control and nutrient source."

Sudbury D-Thatch does what its name implies, and while the three key active components must be self-mixed, Sudbury's position is that liquid application is convenient. Ringer strongly believes in the slow release approach and concentrates on organic solutions with its broad range of products that serve the increasing demand for natural, safer remedies.



Households that purchased a fertilizer product in 1987:

45 percent

or

32 million

Source: National Gardening Assn./Gallup Organization

Another emerging category is plant protectants or anti-transpirants. Playing an important role in frost protection in agriculture and transplant shock reduction in horticulture, they have several home uses. Effective on trees and shrubs against freeze, on Christmas trees and wreaths against needle drop, on outdoor plants against summer stress, wind and drought and on all plants against transplant shock and dry-out, protectants have year round marketability.

The three players in the retail arena are Wilt-Pruf, Greenwich, Conn., ForEverGreen (formerly Envy) from Safer Inc., Wellesley, Mass., and Easy Gardener's CloudCover, Waco, Texas. Available in RTU and concentrate forms, each of the brands has upgraded graphics for maximum shelf appeal and will be subject to more aggressive promotion and positioning in the near future.

Proper in-store placement of these sideline products is important; the ability of sales clerks to realize cross-sell opportunities is equally important. Good retailers will not overlook the chance to capitalize on this, nor will they fail to recognize a customer who may be predisposed to diversity in fertilizer usage—a granular for the lawn, a liquid spray for the flower bed, spikes for the trees and premeasured plant food for houseplants. Creative merchandising, a thorough, knowledgeable sales staff at retail, coupled with some hefty promotional dollars and innovative products at the manufacturing level, are key to stepping up the pace further in this lawn and garden category. **—LGM**

Adele Rogers has spent the last nine years of her 20-year marketing, sales and general management career in the lawn and garden industry, beginning with W.R. Grace as marketing manager for Peters Plant Foods and Terra-lite soil amendments. She then joined Safer Inc. and eventually became vice president of U.S. operations. Rogers is currently operating a marketing and management services firm, which concentrates on assisting primarily lawn and garden companies to identify product and promotional opportunities, as well as providing hands-on project execution. For more information, you may contact her at (603) 382-5888

Product Movement Report

Fall/Winter 1987

Nationally, sales in 11 of 22 fall and winter product categories increased, according to retailers responding to this *Lawn & Garden Marketing* survey. Retailers in three categories—garden centers, hardware/home centers and power equipment dealers—were asked to compare sales in the two seasons of fall and winter in 1987 vs. 1986.

Electric and gas chainsaws, electric and gas shredders/grinders and electric snowthrowers contributed to the fall sales decreases, according to respondents. Electric snowthrowers also contributed to winter sales decreases.

Those categories in which most retailers who responded indicated flat sales were electric and wheeled blowers/vacuums in the fall and gas snowthrowers and tractors in the winter.

Regionally Northeasterners, and categorically garden centers, rated fall and winter sales seasons most highly. In fact, 17 percent of the Northeasterners and 15 percent of the garden centers who responded rated the fall sales season as excellent; 16 percent of the Northeasterners and 16 percent of the garden centers who responded rated the winter sales season as excellent.

Nationwide, 10 percent of all retailers who responded said the fall sales season was excellent, 37 percent said good, 27 percent said average, 24 percent said below average and 2 percent said poor.

The winter selling season was rated excellent by 13 percent nationally of those responding, good by 27 percent, average by 24 percent, below average by 24 percent and poor by 9 percent.

Product categories that seemed to do exceptionally well all over the United States in the fall, according to respondents, were grass seed, lawn fertilizer, garden tools, gas blowers/vacuums, lawn tractors and gas snowthrowers.

Sales of garden tools in the fall were shown to be up by 40 percent of the hardware/home center respondents, who boosted national totals in this product category. (In all of 1987, 26 million—37 percent—of all U.S. households purchased hand garden tools, according to the 1987-88 National Gardening Survey, conducted by the Gallup organization and sponsored by the National Gardening Assn.)

As reported in the April/May issue

continued...

West

Products	% Up	% Same	% Down
Fall sales in '88 vs. '87:			
Bulbs	14	14	10
Grass seed	15	31	10
Lawn fertilizers	25	25	10
Garden tools	17	35	15
Blowers/vacuums:			
Gas	14	12	8
Electric	23	27	8
Wheeled	8	8	6
Chainsaws:			
Electric	6	14	15
Gas	12	21	19
Shredders/grinders:			
Electric	4	12	2
Gas	10	8	8
Lawn tractors	10	16	12
Snowthrowers:			
Electric	2	4	14
Gas	14	6	17
Winter sales in '87-'88 vs. '86-'87:			
Indoor plant supplies	14	19	6
Birdfeeders	25	15	6
Trim-a-tree	16	12	4
Melting compounds	12	6	14
Snow shovels	12	2	17
Snowthrowers:			
Electric	2	6	12
Gas	14	4	15
Lawn tractors	4	17	12

Based on % of those carrying the product line, indicating sales movement.

Source: *LGM* fall/winter 1987-88 survey.

North Central

Products	% Up	% Same	% Down
Fall sales in '88 vs. '87:			
Bulbs	8	10	3
Grass seed	14	24	4
Lawn fertilizers	12	22	12
Garden tools	8	24	12
Blowers/vacuums:			
Gas	14	26	11
Electric	8	11	16
Wheeled	1	9	5
Chainsaws:			
Electric	4	8	9
Gas	11	19	23
Shredders/grinders:			
Electric	5	3	4
Gas	5	3	4
Lawn tractors	26	16	18
Snowthrowers:			
Electric	3	7	15
Gas	19	19	31
Winter sales in '87-'88 vs. '86-'87:			
Indoor plant supplies	4	11	3
Birdfeeders	11	22	4
Trim-a-tree	14	12	3
Melting compounds	15	12	5
Snow shovels	14	16	10
Snowthrowers:			
Electric	3	5	12
Gas	20	15	31
Lawn tractors	20	12	18

Based on % of those carrying the product line, indicating sales movement.

Source: *LGM* fall/winter 1987-88 survey.

South

Products	% Up	% Same	% Down
Fall sales in '88 vs. '87:			
Bulbs	11	5	5
Grass seed	16	13	3
Lawn fertilizers	20	7	13
Garden tools	14	27	9
Blowers/vacuums:			
Gas	23	30	11
Electric	11	14	13
Wheeled	7	2	11
Chainsaws:			
Electric	2	13	13
Gas	23	9	38
Shredders/grinders:			
Electric	—	4	5
Gas	2	5	14
Lawn tractors	16	21	23
Snowthrowers:			
Electric	—	—	4
Gas	2	—	4
Winter sales in '87-'88 vs. '86-'87:			
Indoor plant supplies	4	11	4
Birdfeeders	9	20	4
Trim-a-tree	5	9	4
Melting compounds	9	7	—
Snow shovels	11	5	4
Snowthrowers:			
Electric	—	—	4
Gas	2	—	5
Lawn tractors	9	21	16

Based on % of those carrying the product line, indicating sales movement.

Source: LGM fall/winter 1987-88 survey.

[illegible]

Product Movement...continued

of *LGM*, manufacturers' incentives/promotions and mother nature contributed to preseason gas snowthrower sales, particularly in the Northeast. It was in that region of the country where 40 percent of the respondents said sales of gasoline-powered snowthrowers were up vs. last year; 29 percent of all responding power equipment dealerships said the same.

Respondents noted that product categories that seemed to do exceptionally well across the nation in the winter were birdfeeders, trim-a-tree and bagged melting compounds, which obviously contributed to the positive responses shown by garden centers.

Winter sales of gas snowthrowers and lawn tractors were flat in '88 vs. '87, respondents reported. Slightly more responding retailers indicated sales decreases of electric snowthrowers compared to last year.

Respondents' sales increases of grass seed and lawn fertilizer in the fall may partly be credited to the efforts of such groups as the Nursery Marketing Council and the Planting Council (now joined as the Garden Council), which, through national advertising and celebrity spokesperson Willard Scott, encourage consumers to take part in year-round planting activities.

Positive sales in the fall bulb category are further reflected in the '87-'88 National Gardening Survey. The survey reported that $456 million was spent on all bulbs in 1987, a 6 percent increase in retail sales over 1986.

Retailers were asked for their ending inventory in four product categories. A median of nine chainsaws, seven snowthrowers, six lawn tractors and three blowers/vacs were held over. Nationwide, 11 percent of power equipment respondents said they were holding over 25 or more gas chainsaws. Only 10 percent were holding less than five. **—LGM**

The fall/winter 1987-88 survey results were based on 227 responses from three categories of retailers: garden centers, hardware/home centers and power equipment dealers. Retailers were asked to compare sales of product categories in fall/winter 1986-87 to fall/winter 1987-88. Surveys were mailed on an nth name basis.

Retail Marketplace

Editor's note:

Beginning this month, Retail Marketplace replaces Green Scene. It will cover many of the same topics previously covered by Green Scene but will better target your needs for information on packaged products, hardlines, greengoods and companies producing these lines. Market statistics relevant to making your retail business more successful will be included as well.

Monsanto acquires Greensweep from The Andersons

In April, Monsanto, St. Louis, makers of Roundup, acquired the Greensweep product line from The Andersons, Maumee, Ohio. An acquisition in this product category—rather than a new formulation—was seen by Monsanto as more desirable, according to Arnold Donald, business director of the lawn and garden division for Monsanto. He said, "We felt it was more prudent to acquire than to become yet another player in the liquid hose-end category—trying to build an established brand name and actually, at the same time, trying to displace today's category leader, which is Greensweep."

The popular product line has produced annual sales valued at approximately $50 million at retail. The exact purchase price of the line, though not disclosed, was in excess of $5 million.

Monsanto will roll the product line into its lawn and garden division at the end of the season, and the Greensweep name will be retained because of its recognition at the consumer level. Furthermore, Monsanto will likely expand the Greensweep line. Donald explained, "Over time we have every expectation that the line will include new chemistry that is developing... available probably in 1990."

The Andersons, which has six retail operations and currently is one of the largest private labelers of granular products, sees the sale of the Greensweep line as "a springboard into other opportunities," said Rich Raleigh, formerly marketing manager of the lawn division at The Andersons. According to Raleigh, the company has other products on the drawing-board ready for consumer entry and has plans to expand its retail store base.

Raleigh is now working for Monsanto, initially heading up its acquisition team during the transition. When asked if The Andersons' General Stores will continue to carry Greensweep, Raleigh answered, "You bet!"

Arett Sales founder dies at 87

Charles Librett, joint founder of **Arett Sales Corp.**, Cherry Hill, N.J., died March 10 in New Rochelle, N.Y. He was 87. Librett founded Arett Sales in 1951 in partnership with Eric Mueller and David Boylan.

Arett Sales has grown to be one of the leading lawn and garden distributorships in the country with 180,000 sq. ft. of warehouse space and 40 salespeople. The company will continue, run by his son, Irv Librett, who joined the company in 1962.

Garden Council established

The Nursery Marketing Council and The Planting Council have united to form one organization to promote the industry as the Garden Council. The board of directors consists of retailers, growers, landscape contractors/installers, association reps, industry and consumer manufacturers, distributors and communicators and educators.

The group plans to "Grow the Market" and focus its attention in 1989 on National Garden Week and the Fall is for Planting campaign.

Briefs

- A survey by the Gallup Organization says that the rose is America's most popular flower. Twenty-three million households grow roses—nearly 26.9 percent of the total number of households. Americans spent almost $400 million in 1987 to grow roses.
- **Ortho Consumer Products,** a division of Chevron Chemical Co., San Ramon, Calif., was given a special award from the National 4-H Council in recognition of three decades' support of 4-H programs. Also, Chevron has purchased the agricultural chemical products of Pittsburgh-based **PPG Industries Inc.**
- **The Toro Co.,** Riverside, Calif., has launched a national advertising campaign to promote products and encourage practices that conserve irrigation water. Titled "One Small Planet. One Big Challenge," the ads will appear in trade publications and be followed by intensive mailings.
- Steve Fesperman has been appointed vice president of **Koos Inc.,** Kenosha, Wis.; he will oversee operations at Shore Fertilizer Inc., Plant City, Fla.

Landscaping up in '87

The National Landscape Assn.'s 13th annual Economic Survey reports that the industry saw an increase in business of 20.5 percent in 1987, greater than the 16.5 percent increase predicted at the beginning of 1987.

In 1988, respondents said they are looking for the greatest increase in the category of new residential landscaping. They anticipate somewhat smaller increases for new commercial landscaping and residential renovation and a minor increase for commercial renovation.

1987 Change in Landscape Business*

	New Residential			Residential Renovation		
	up	same	down	up	same	down
Northeast	87%	13%	00%	73%	27%	00%
Southeast	65%	29%	6%	49%	43%	8%
Great Lakes	81%	18%	1%	65%	32%	3%
Great Plains	52%	31%	17%	68%	30%	2%
Other	50%	36%	14%	46%	39%	15%
Average	73%	22%	5%	63%	33%	4%

Source: National Landscape Assn. December 1987 Economic Survey

*Percent reporting changes from 1986

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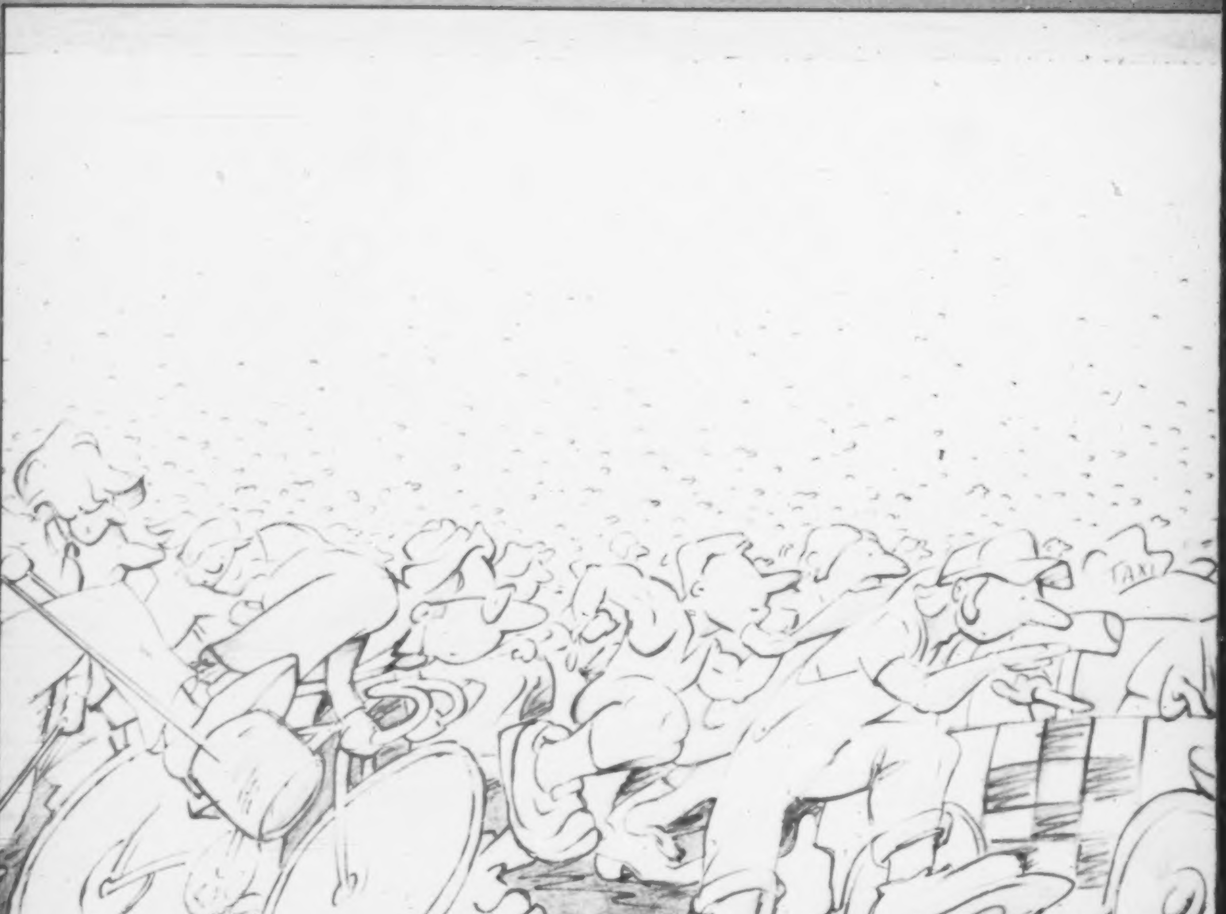
Lawn&Garden Marketing™

JULY 1988

An Intertec publication

Cover story: Ready, set, Expo!

Commercial accounts • New engine designs



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F00100820000000XLB NY2

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PUBLISHED 10 TIMES ANNUALLY
JULY 1988
VOL 27 NO 6

Lawn&Garden Marketing™

The merchandising magazine for lawn, garden and leisure living products.

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Ready, set, Expo!

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Did you know?

What do consumers look for when shopping for OPE? Fifty-seven percent want a good warranty or guarantee. Others want: price/affordability, 55 percent; safety features, 47 percent; easy maintenance, 45 percent; and high-quality construction, 44 percent.

Source: OPEI/1987-88 National Gardening Assn. annual survey by the Gallup organization.

Lawn & Garden Marketing (ISSN 0091-4665) is published 10 times annually free to qualified subscribers by Intertec Publishing Corp., 9221 Quivira Rd., Overland Park, KS 66215. Second-class postage paid at Shawnee Mission, KS and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12960, Overland Park, KS 66212.

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From the Editor

Approximately 97 percent of all U.S. households own a TV (which people watch, on average, seven hours per day); approximately 47 percent of all U.S. households now own a VCR as well.

Why is that important to you? Because every time someone buys a VCR, a television or rents a video movie, he may not be buying a lawnmower, tractor, tiller, snowthrower, shredder, logsplitter, vacuum or blower. And each time he watches that movie, he may not be out in his yard mowing, trimming or gardening. The fact of the matter is, those products—and retailers of those products—compete against you. That's important.

Though admittedly less than perfect, demographic information and other marketing statistics can provide valuable insight to retailers about who their customers presently are, who they are not and who they could be. Knowledge of such statistics can help a smart retailer exploit his marketing niche or uncover a new marketing niche.

Thanks to the efforts of and funding by The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, this industry now has the most comprehensive marketing data available on OPE customers today. The OPEI has spent nearly one year surveying OPE customers and identifying buying patterns: who bought what, why, when and, perhaps most importantly to you, where they bought it.

Based on a sample of 275,000 U.S. households, the results of this consumer research will be presented in a seminar at the International Lawn, Garden and Power Equipment Expo in Louisville. Titled "Using information about OPE customers to increase your profits," the seminar will be delivered by George Griffin, vice president of Industrial Marketing Research.

Results from The National Gardening Assn. Annual Survey by the Gallup Organization already show us that, statistically speaking, 59.9 million households, or 67 percent, own at least one type of outdoor power equipment: the top five pieces are gas-powered walk-behinds, chainsaws, string trimmers, garden tillers and power edgers. And in 1987 alone, 25 percent, or 18 million households, purchased a piece of power equipment.

Further results show us that, demographically speaking, power equipment ownership is highest among households 30 years of age and older, college-educated households, those with professional and business occupations, households with annual incomes of $30,000 and over, married households and suburban and rural households.

Statistics gathered from the IMR study will add to that information by providing a current profile of the lawn and garden buyer for each product category and break out the information by region and state (which should be especially beneficial to distributor attendees).

But as the saying goes, "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing." Without knowing how to apply the knowledge to your business, statistics can be useless—or worse, misused. To avoid such a possibility, the Expo seminar has been devised to provide marketing statistics and examples for retailers to apply the knowledge to marketing strategies and product selection.

In short, I urge you to attend.

Susan L. Anderson

Lawn&Garden Marketing

LAWN & GARDEN MARKETING, Vol. 27, No. 6, is published 10 times annually Jan-April, June-Nov by Intertec Publishing Corp., 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212, (913) 888-4664.

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Subscription Info: Publication mailed free in U.S./Canada to qualified persons in retail/wholesale businesses responsible for buying/merchandising product lines and services related to landscaping, gardening, turf, patio, indoor plants and leisure living. Non-qualified subscriptions are $24 a year (U.S) or $30 (Canada and other countries). Foreign airmail optional at extra $55/year. Single copy price $2 plus postage/handling. Back issue price, $3 plus postage/handling. Adjustments necessitated by paid subscription termination at single copy rate. Allow 6-8 weeks for address change or new subscription processing. Address subscription correspondence to P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.

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Feedback

Compiled by **Gina Kellogg Hogan,** *associate editor*

Although OPE dealers surveyed in the March 1988 *Lawn & Garden Marketing* questionnaire say that commercial accounts are often the most demanding and time-consuming accounts to handle, they also state that the accounts are worthwhile and create good business opportunities—as well as offer good **repeat business. (See "Catering to commercial accounts," page 26.)**

Based on 127 responses, the results indicate that most of those involved in selling to professional accounts—95.3 percent—agree that commercial accounts are a "worthwhile part of our business" and that "growth in commercial business is excellent." Many did add, however, that "commercial customers are the most taxing on a service department."

Most of the respondents who cater to professional accounts own one store—83.4 percent—with a median annual sales volume of $348,000. A median of 21.4 percent of annual sales are derived from commercial accounts by the respondents in this field.

Most respondents—67.8 percent—said they actively pursue commercial accounts and that of the commercial accounts they pursue, government accounts are of the highest priority. Nearly 92 percent of respondents said they sell to government accounts.

Respondents appreciate the convenience of buying from a manufacturer who offers both a professional and a consumer line. Nearly 83 percent said they thought that manufacturers who provide equipment for both aspects of the business were helpful.

The types of commercial equipment that were sold and serviced by respondents varied from large pieces of power equipment to accessories. As would be expected, almost all of the respondents sold what they serviced. The most often-sold pieces of power equipment were walk-behind lawnmowers and trimmers/brushcutters; 93.4 percent of the respondents sold these two items.

As far as the individual numbers for the individual units, on walk-behinds, 95.9 percent of the respondents sold and/or serviced the units. More specifically, just over 93 percent sold walk-behinds, and 88.4 percent serviced them.

Nearly 87 percent sold and/or serviced tractors and attachments; 84.3 percent individually sold and 80.2 percent individually serviced. For accessories, such as bags, 86.6 percent sold and/or serviced. For batteries, it was 96 percent; replacement parts, 93.4 percent; and chains for snow season, 61.2 percent.

Eighty-seven percent sold and/or serviced chainsaws; 83.5 percent sold, and 79.3 percent serviced. On blowers, 90.9 percent sold and/or serviced; 89.3 percent sold, and 81 percent serviced. On trimmers/brushcutters, 95 percent sold and/or serviced; 93.4 percent sold, and 85.1 percent serviced.

Comments by respondents on dealing with commercial accounts varied from extremely positive to extremely negative.

We don't pursue commercial business. Most (customers) are price shoppers who want *bottom, bottom* price and *first-in-line* service, after seriously abusing equipment. Our accounts are smaller commercial users—*Nels Nelsen, Nelsen's **Mower & Saw Inc., Kenosha, Wis.***

It is a very hard business, as at times you bid against your distributor, and he can bid lower than we can. It is a small profit margin for dealers—*Al Vogele, Engine Shed, Rapid City, S.D.*

We could not survive without commercial accounts. Consumers see what commercial companies use for equipment; if they want good equipment, they see us. Commercial business is always there, especially municipal accounts—*Kent Evans, Romney Implement Co., El Paso, Texas*

It is a love/hate relationship. You have to use the commercial account systems. The basic rule is to be sure to make money; usually the service sells the product—*Daniel Coleman, McGuckin Hardware, Boulder, Colo.*

It is unfortunate, but some dealers in my area give away their products to commercial customers, while I try to hold my price, pointing out service and discounts—*Jack Mrozinski, Earth & Turf Inc., Stevens Point, Wis.*

Servicing the commercial cutter provides a valuable source for "word of mouth" advertising; when they are satisfied with your work, they don't hesitate to recommend your services to their clients—*Robert Eklund, Eklund's Small Engine Service, Inglis, Fla.*

We are relatively new and take our business where we can get it. I find agricultural (farmers) accounts to be as demanding in turn-around times as commercial. Agricultural units, engines, etc., are usually not as well cared for by the customer—*Leonard Gardner, Gardner's Saw Shop, Avoca, N.Y.*

We have 90 percent of commercial business in our area, due to the reputation for quality products and excellent service—*Larry B. Fleis, Lark Lawn & Garden, Grawn, Mich.*

We just started actively pursuing commercial accounts, so right now we only have a few (about 7-10). But we are anticipating it to grow rapidly. We have already expanded this year—***Bob Pocius, Twins Mower, Twinsburg, Ohio.* —LGM**

Professional accounts

Percentage of annual sales that commercial accounts represent of respondents who are involved in the business:

Percentage of annual sales	Total	Percentage of annual sales	Total
Less than 10%	26.5	**25% to 49%**	15.7
10% to 14%	11.6	**50% or more**	16.5
15% to 24%	5.0	**No answer**	24.7

Source: *Lawn & Garden Marketing* March 1988 questionnaire.

EPA bans diazinon pesticides

The use of diazinon pesticides on golf courses and sod farms has been banned by the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. The action was taken in response to a concern that widespread and continued use of the pesticide is a hazard to birds.

Hearings were held for more than a year in which scientific evidence on benefits and risks was presented. The Final Cancellation Order, signed in March, prohibits the distribution and sale of all products containing diazinon that are labeled for use on home lawns, turf or grass, except for those home-use products whose labels contain a statement that indicates that the product must not be used on golf courses or sod farms; home-use products with such labels can be sold.

The order also specifically prohibits the use of any pesticide product containing diazinon on golf courses or sod farms.

In other news, the EPA banned the anti-termite pesticides chlordane and heptachlor. Shown to cause cancer in laboratory animals, chlordane and heptachlor were removed from store shelves in April.

"Safe" interpreted differently by consumers

The meaning of the word "safe" on plant food packaging is not agreed upon by consumers, according to a *Better Homes and Gardens* survey.

When asked what the word meant when used on plant food packaging, 50 percent of the respondents thought it meant the product was safe for plants; 40 percent thought it meant safe for people and pets; and 27 percent thought it meant safe for the environment.

These results are from a survey of a specific segment of *BH&G* readers but are not necessarily typical of consumers as a whole. The survey was based on 421 (out of 500) questionnaires that *BH&G* sent to subscribers.

What "safe" means to *BH&G* readers*

Responses of *Better Homes and Gardens* subscribers when asked what "safe" meant on plant food package:

50% Safe for plants

40% Safe for people and pets

27% Safe for the environment

*Based on respondents to *Better Homes and Gardens* Consumer Panel survey of subscribers.

Newly formed Garden Council approves plans, marketing strategies for 1989

Two marketing programs will be supported in 1989 by the newly formed Garden Council: National Garden Month and Fall is for Planting.

Many supporters of National Garden Week believe a lack of an industry-wide effort to promote it has prevented it from drawing the attention it merits. Garden Council president Gordon Bailey Jr. says the group chose to support the entire month of April instead of just one week because "a specific week for the whole United States doesn't fit well." The second week of April is the week set aside for promotion by the federal government.

THE GARDEN COUNCIL

As Bailey explains it, spring is different in the South than it is is the North, and the week that works for one might not work for the other. "A *month* fits national promotion better," he says.

When asked if the Council planned to encourage the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate to pass a bill that officially designates April as National Garden Month, Bailey says he thinks it is an "idea worth entertaining." While Bailey says he wasn't aware of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute's drive to proclaim April as National Outdoor Power Equipment Safety Month, he says he doesn't feel that the two will compete for consumers' attention.

The Council also will work on the continuation of the "Fall is for Planting" campaign. "We're not going to reinvent the wheel," says Bailey. "We plan to build on what has already been done."

Frank's/Flower Time recognize vendors

Frank's Nursery & Crafts and Flower Time Inc., Detroit, operating units of General Host Corp., awarded plaques to 12 garden and craft vendors for outstanding sales volume and exemplary service.

Lawn and garden vendors honored included Greenview Lawn and Garden Products, Hyponex Corp., Monrovia Nursery Co., New England Pottery, Chevron Chemical/Ortho and True Temper Corp. Frank's operates 248 stores.

Hyponex L&G business sold to Scott

The O.M. Scott & Sons Co., Marysville, Ohio, has announced its purchase of the lawn and garden business of Atlanta-based Hyponex Corp. Scott paid $14 a share, for a total of about $72.8 million. The Hyponex line includes organic soils for indoor and outdoor use, decorative mulches, plant care products and lawn fertilizers. Scott has a consumer DIY line of fertilizers, seed, spreaders, tools and watering products.

Briefs

- Currently undergoing major revisions, hardiness maps—the maps that say where and when in North America plants can be planted with reasonable hope of success—will be more helpful to retailers in the future. Henry Cathey, U.S. National Arboretum director, says the maps are out of date and based on data from 1930. New maps will be computerized and include other information, such as locations of city "heat islands."

- **Chevron Chemical Co.**, San Francisco, and **Sumitomo Chemical Co. Ltd.**, Japan, signed a joint-venture agreement creating a new company to develop and market agricultural chemical products in the United States. The new company, Valent U.S.A. Corp., will be based in Walnut Creek, Calif.

- **Dayco Products Inc.**, Dayton, Ohio, makers of YardMate garden hose, announced its plans to move to North Charleston, S.C. The headquarters will move into temporary facilities in North Charleston by spring 1989; a permanent building is scheduled for completion in 1991, at which time the research and development center, now in Springfield, Mo., will relocate.

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Lawn&Garden Marketing™

AUGUST 1988
An Intertec publication

Cover story: NHS—a passport to success

Outdoor lighting • Non-plant pesticides

PASSPORT
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SPECIAL SECTION
Lawn and Garden
Distributors
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PUBLISHED 10 TIMES ANNUALLY
AUGUST 1988
VOL. 27, NO. 7

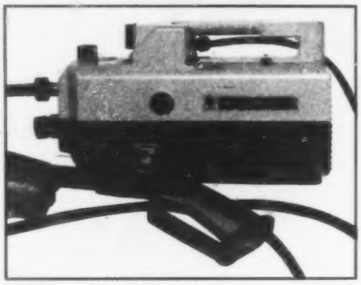
Lawn&Garden Marketing™

The merchandising magazine for lawn, garden and leisure living products.

Lightscaping, 6

CHICAGO, ILL
1988
AUG. 14-17

NHS, 13



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Did you know?

Retail sales of walk-behind mowers are divided among seven classes of retailers: national retailers, 29%; hardware stores, 17%; discount stores, 14%; lawn and garden centers, 12%; home centers, 7%; OPE dealers, 3%; and farm supply, 2%.

Source: OPEI/1987-88 *Outdoor Power Equipment Retail Sales Report.*

Lawn & Garden Marketing (ISSN 0091-4665) is published 10 times annually free to qualified subscribers by Intertec Publishing—A Macmillan Co., 9221 Quivira Rd., Overland Park, KS 66215. 2nd-class postage paid at Shawnee Mission, KS and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12960, Overland Park, KS 66212.
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From the Editor

garden shop

Farmers lament it as the 1988 drought; weather forecasters call it a heat wave; and scientists speculate that it's a global warming trend, evidence of their long-prophesied "greenhouse effect."

No matter what the term, this year's lack of rainfall, coupled with higher-than-average temperatures, has affected everything from the way our products are shipped, to the way we prepare our food, to the way we demonstrate patriotism, to the way we care for our lawns and gardens.

Particularly throughout the Midwest and Southern regions of the country, lack of rainfall this year generated edicts by various municipalities limiting—even forbidding—the watering of lawns and gardens and the use of charcoal grills for food preparation. Some cities even banned fireworks displays during our country's Fourth of July celebrations.

Charlie Dunn of the Garden Center Institute, which provides marketing services to the industry, succinctly described the drought's affect on one region: "The Southeast is dead." In his own city of Atlanta, rainfall during the first six months already was off by more than 50 percent. And, on a June trip to northeast Kansas, he found that many discounters already had closed out their seasonal lawn and garden departments, and at other year-round garden center operations, plants were stressed severely.

Power equipment retailers have been equally burned by the drought as consumers seem to have put off purchases of equipment. The drought, as a matter of fact, was one of the main topics for discussion at a gathering of power equipment manufacturers at an annual conference in June. Manufacturers seemed to agree that retailers in this industry have the staying power needed to sustain the effects of a down year. Said John Munn, president of Wheel Horse Products, "Watering bans have hurt (sales)....and retailers are hurt, but they don't think the world is coming to an end." And Jairo Estrada, president of Garden Way Inc., predicted that, because of the maturity of this industry, "We can weather these changes better than many other industries."

Although it is true that the drought has translated into lost profits for many retailers—landscaping services are off, as are sales of fertilizer products, power equipment and repair services—there is a silver lining to this cloud. On a positive note, the drought suggests that sales of certain pesticides may be receiving a boost due to the kinds of warm-weather pests that thrive during dry conditions.

And industry experts speculate that with rain later in the year, the fall selling season will rebound with homeowners' interests revigorated and with their desires to replace effected plant material.

In our annual Market Data Issue in November/December, we will cover the topic more thoroughly, assessing the damage regionally and detailing how it has affected sales by category in 1988 and how it may affect sales in 1989. In the meantime, please take a few moments to tell us your story. See "The 1988 Drought," page 21.

Susan L. Anderson

Lawn & Garden Marketing

LAWN & GARDEN MARKETING, Vol. 27, No. 7, is published 10 times annually Jan-April, June-Nov by Intertec Publishing—A Macmillan Co., 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212, (913) 888-4664.

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Subscription info: Publication mailed free in U.S./Canada to qualified persons in retail/wholesale businesses responsible for buying/merchandising product lines and services related to landscaping, gardening, turf, patio, indoor plants and leisure living. Non-qualified subscriptions are $24 a year (U.S) or $30 (Canada and other countries). Foreign airmail optional at extra $55/year. Single copy price $2 plus postage/handling. Back issue price, $3 plus postage/handling. Adjustments necessitated by paid subscription termination at single copy rate. Allow 6-8 weeks for address change or new subscription processing. Address subscription correspondence to P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.

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Correspondence: Mail to 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212.

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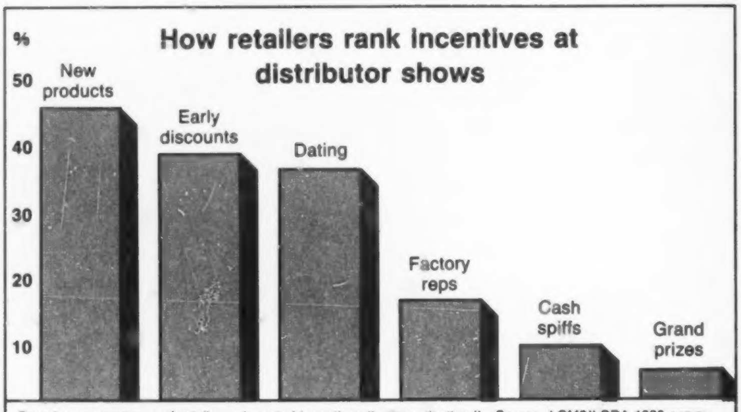
Study reveals importance of distributors



Based on percentages of retailers who rated incentives "very motivating." Source: *LGM*/NLGDA 1986 survey.

How pervasive is the two-step method of distribution in lawn and garden? One in four independents buys nearly 100 percent of his hardlines and package goods through a distributor. In all, 64 percent of the independents purchase more than 50 percent of the same through two-step. And nearly one in three is supplied by at least six distributors! (Only 1 percent has only one supplier.)

Members of the National Lawn and Garden Distributors Assn. wanted more detailed information like this about the independent retailer. So, in 1986, the NLGDA, together with *Lawn & Garden Marketing* magazine, undertook one of the most ambitious research projects to date. A sampling of nearly 400 independent lawn and garden retailers across the country was asked comprehensive questions pertaining to store size, sales volume, product mix, competition and opinions of supplier services. The result—the "Market Analysis on the Garden Center Industry," —is a compila-

THIS PRETTY MUCH DESCRIBES CONVENTIONAL PESTICIDE SALES.

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tion of information about the independent lawn and garden retailer never before collected in one complete package.

An overview

According to the survey, training by suppliers—both manufacturers and distributors—ranks high with retailers when stacked up against other benefits and services that the suppliers offer. Only distributor catalogs are rated as more valuable.

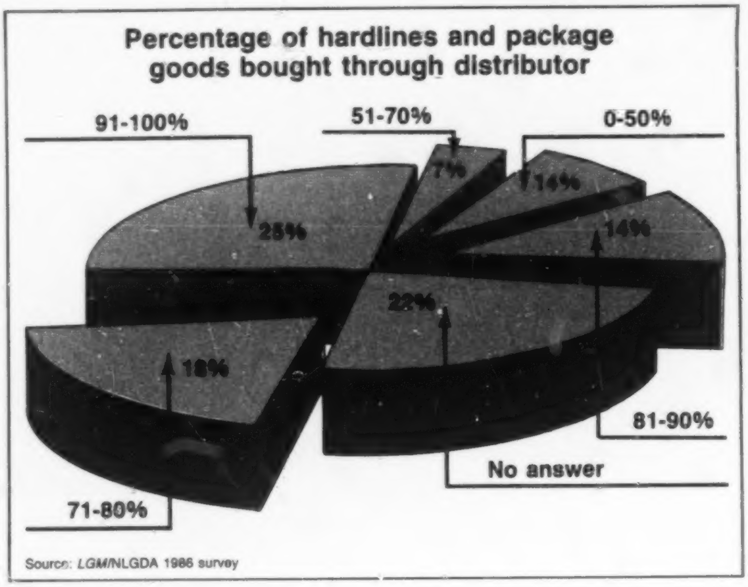
Distributor trade shows are ranked as "very important" to a majority of the retailers. More than two-thirds of the respondents said they attend them, and new products seem to be the key motivating factor. Early order discounts, along with dating programs, are very motivating distributor show incentives as well. But only one in 20 say grand prizes are very motivating.

Retailers had a chance to rank distributor qualities as well. The study revealed that in choosing a distributor, dependability, delivery service, overall service, fill ratio and price were the top five factors.

In part, the "Market Analysis on the Garden Center Industry " pinpoints what retailers view as the most valuable services the lawn and garden distributor offers; at the same time, it pinpoints what they view as the least valuable.

Distributors and manufacturers alike have used the results of this survey—like many of these mentioned here— to gain a better understanding of the needs of the independent retailer in an effort

continued on page D-52...


Percentage of hardlines and package goods bought through distributor

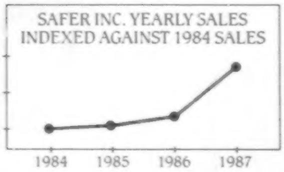
Source: *LGM*/NLGDA 1986 survey

THIS PRETTY MUCH EXPLAINS WHY.

Conventional, petrochemical-based pesticides aren't exactly setting sales records these days. Increased consumer sensitivity to their risks and more stringent EPA standards, including the banning of some products, are all taking their toll.

On the other hand, consider the reception Safer *non-toxic* pesticides are receiving. In the last year alone, fueled by heightened consumer awareness and on-going national advertising support, our sales have more than doubled (see chart).

Make sure you devote plenty of shelf space to the Safer expanded line. Otherwise, you might find yourself flat out.


SAFER INC. YEARLY SALES INDEXED AGAINST 1984 SALES

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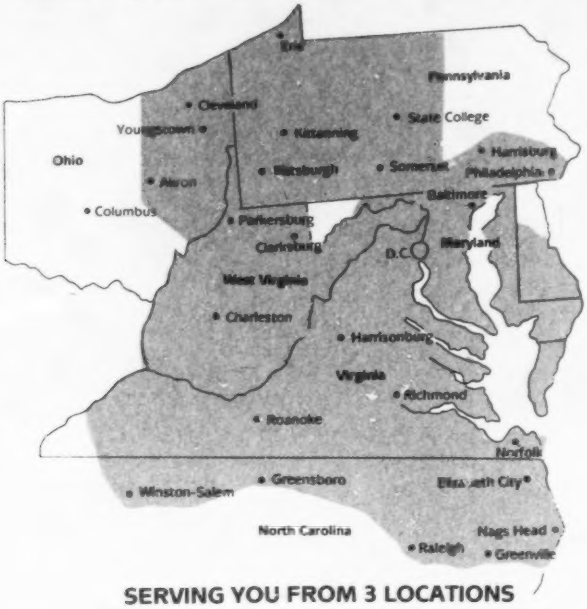
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Study...continued

to more closely match their services to those needs.

Complete copies of the study, including the profile information, is available for purchase by contacting Bill Robinson, executive director NLGDA, 1900 Arch St., Philadelphia, PA 19103; (215) 564-3484. **—LGM**

How retailers rate the value of distributor's services

Service	%
Catalogs	[illegible]
Training	[illegible]
Service merchandising	[illegible]
Programmed planograms	[illegible]
Computer entry	[illegible]
Shelf labels	[illegible]

Based on percentages of retailers who rated services as "very valuable."
Source: LGM/NLGDA 1988 survey

Why retailers use one distributor over another

Criteria	%
Dependability	95
Delivery service	92
Service	87
Fill ratio	80
Price	79
Early orders	69
Terms	68
Wats line	65
Sales representative	59
Ad programs	49
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Distributor shows	31

Source: *LGM/NLGDA* 1988 survey

Editor's Note:

All editorial in the August 1988 Special Section "Distributors—Meeting retailers' needs across the country" was written by Jane Forman Cigard. Cover illustration by Linda Pokorny.

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Power Equipment Report

Replacement buyers are paying more

An Outdoor Power Equipment Institute continuing national research program that is used to track the retail market for key lawn and garden products has found that experienced buyers (those who are replacing a product) clearly are buying different products than first-time buyers.

For every product surveyed, the replacement buyer has paid a higher median price. This indicates an upgrade in product and features as compared with the first-time buyer.

OPEI also has researched the median incomes of various product buyers. The highest median income—$49,741—is found among garden-tractor purchasers; they are followed by the snowblower buyers, with a median income of $43,726. Walk-behind lawnmower buyers' median is $37,556. Such a wide range of income indicates different advertising strategy and product appeal.

This OPEI research program involves contacting 5,285 randomly selected U.S. households each week by telephone. The program began on September 1, 1987, and, over a twelve-month period, 275,000 households will have been contacted to see if they have purchased a particular product during the past 3, 6 or 12 months. Those having bought a product then are asked a series of questions regarding the product, the purchaser and the retail outlet.

First-time vs. replacement buyers

Product	Median price first-time	Median price replacement
Lawnmower	$193	$232
Riding mower	1,072	1,205
Lawn tractor	1,118	1,354
Garden tractor	1,852	2,799
Snowthrower	331	432
Tiller	392	499

Source: 1987-88 OPEI national research program on retail sales

Briefs

- The Honda Engine Dept. of **American Honda Motor Co. Inc.**, Los Angeles, has announced the expansion of its Honda engine distributor network to include Lightbourn Equipment Co., Pasadena, Texas. Lightbourn will supply Honda Engines to Texan dealers in San Antonio, Dallas, Houston and the surrounding areas.

- **Kubota Tractor Corp.**, Los Angeles, has announced the promotion of Bud Hopkins to national parts manager; Dan Ferris will be director of distribution, purchasing and assembly; Syd Wyncoop is in the newly established position of assistant director of financial services.

- **Sachs-Dolmar Div.**, Shreveport, La., has increased the warranty on its two-stroke lawnmowers. These mowers now have a two-year warranty on the engines and a one-year warranty on the deck when purchased for consumer use. For commercial use, a one-year warranty on both the engines and the deck is offered. The company also has introduced a new six-page full-line catalog and a POP and promotional giveaway catalog targeted for Sachs-Dolmar distributors/dealers.

- Robert A. Leffel is the new director of sales and service, engine division, at **Kohler Co.**, Kohler, Wis.; David J. Ekvall is the new manager, national accounts.

- Paul Schleiff has been appointed district sales manager for **Sten's Lawnmower Parts Inc.**, Jasper, Ind. He will be working in Arkansas, west Tennessee, north Mississippi and north Louisiana.

- Randy T. Marra has joined the staff of **Dixon Industries Inc.**, Coffeyville, Kan., as territory manager for New York. He will work out of Rochester, N.Y., and serve as the direct factory contact for dealers throughout the state who sell and service the company's ZTR[R] riding lawnmowers.

M&W Gear Co. acquires Willsey-D Corp. assets

M&W Gear Co., Gibson City, Ill., has acquired all of the assets of the Willsey-D Corp., the manufacturer of the Grazer lawn and commercial grounds-mowing equipment line

The Grazer line, which includes riding mowers and accessories, will continue to be manufactured at the Maple Hill, Kan., plant by the former Willsey-D personnel.

Allegretti & Co. names new vice president of sales

James B. Farland has been named vice president of sales for Allegretti & Co., Chatsworth, Calif.

Farland has been involved in the lawn and garden industry for years. He was previously vice president of sales and marketing for Anchor Swan Corp., the garden hose manufacturer out of Worthington, Ohio.

Walbro Corp. enters small-engine ignition market

Walbro Corp., Cass City, Mich., has signed an agreement with AB Svenska Elektromagneter (SEM), Amal, Sweden, to form a joint-venture company that will manufacture and market ignition systems, flywheels and related components for customers in the small-engine industry worldwide, with the exception of Europe.

The joint-venture company will be known as SEM-Walbro Corp. Walbro will own 51 percent of the joint venture, with SEM holding a 49 percent interest. Headquarters for SEM-Walbro will be in Cass City.

In other news at the company, John H. "Jack" Frazer has been named director of human resources. He also is a member of the Industrial Relations Research Assn.

Cross-selling to non-plant pesticide users

Gardeners are non-plant pesticide users too. And with the myriad of products being offered in this category, lawn and garden retailers are in the best position to offer expert advice to consumers and capitalize on cross-sell opportunities.

By Adele I. Rogers, *editorial contributor*

This certainly is not the first article written for independent or specialty retailers on merchandising and cross-sell opportunities, nor is it likely to be the last. The observation among many manufacturers serving the lawn and garden industry is that much more growth potential exists for retailers who specialize in their trade.

While mass-merchant, supermarket and similar distribution outlets continue to become more important to consumers—as convenient, one-stop vehicles for multiple category shopping—the specialized retailer offers consumers benefits that its superstore competitors cannot.

However, statistics show that within this industry, lawn and garden retail experts have not kept up the momentum in capitalizing on the strengths that originally made them successful. In some cases, the attitude is that personal service, technical knowledge, wide selection and overall satisfaction is little substitute for low prices and one-stop shopping convenience. In some product categories, this may hold true, but the lawn and garden products consumer is better educated, more affluent and more aware than the average consumer in general.

Five reasons to sell non-plant pesticides

1. L&G retailers already know pesticides as a whole.
2. Manufacturers say they rely on retailers to be able to stock and promote the brands.
3. Retailers can be competitive and offer service, too.
4. Retailers more easily can educate consumers about the products.
5. Many of these products are cross-seasonal.

Two product categories that lend themselves well to cross-selling with plant and garden care products are household/outdoor non-plant insecticides, rodenticides and pet-care products. While not all household pesticide users are gardeners, it is likely that the opposite is true: many garden pesticide consumers are users of non-plant pesticides. There has been a downward trend in the importance these products play within the independent channels.

The 1987 Kline Survey on "Consumer Markets for Pesticides and Fertilizers" breaks out the subject categories that sell by key outlet types (see Table 1, p. 40).

In the household insecticide category, supermarkets account for 50 percent of consumer purchases; mass-merchants account for 33 percent. Do the small percentages for lawn and garden centers and others listed in Table 1 spell gloom or opportunity for such outlets? For creative and aggressive retailers, these percentages spell opportunity.

The specialty retailer is the expert

The pesticide category, in general, is more complex than ever (see "Pesticides: Keeping up with the choices," April/May 1988 *Lawn and Garden Marketing*). The lawn and garden expert is the principal source of information on pesticides: for updating information on chemical hazards, new formulas, current packaging and delivery systems; for using the right product for the right application; for defining the pros and cons of natural vs. petrochemical ingredients and the like.

Both manufacturers of garden pesticides and non-plant related pesticide products rely on retailer experts to stock and promote their brands. These manufacturers truly believe the dealer can reap significant volume and profit gains by doing what they do best: servicing and educating.

Largely advertised brands, such as Raid, Black Flag and Hartz Mountain, are prime supermarket and mass-merchant lines that dominate their respective categories. But what about other high quality, innovative and well-respected brands? Especially those that have their roots in lawn and garden chemicals or those that recognize that it is the lawn and garden or similar retailer who is most capable of promoting the manufacturers' lines?

Reaching out to the consumer

Of the more than five dozen insecticide/rodenticide products from Chevron's Ortho division, San Francisco, more than 40 percent are non-plant related. In fact, says marketing manager John Brex, "The 1989 Ortho ad campaign's theme will be 'This is Home,' whereby Ortho will be positioned as the most-trusted, high-quality line of products for all pesticide needs—garden-related or not." Nearly $1 million will be spent, mostly in television, promoting this concept. Plus, retailers will have an opportunity to participate in a special merchandising incentive campaign that revolves around total "home pest control."

Security Products, Atlanta, a subsidi-

continued...

***Cross-selling**...continued*

ary of S. C. Johnson & Son (makers of the Raid brand), also positions its line as a broad-spectrum one. The company concentrates its distribution within the lawn and garden, hardware and home center channels.

Louie Seabolt, president, predicts a trend. "I think there will be more cross-selling evident among certain trade classes. And I foresee more and more garden centers selling household and other categories of pesticides."

A large share of the Spectrum Group's, Jacksonville, Fla., six brand lines can be found in lawn and garden outlets. Hot Shot, Rid-a-Bug and Rid-a-Flea are exclusively household or pet-related brands. Gene Wagnon, director of marketing for Spectrum, believes these lines, along with the company's three lawn and garden lines, offer the independent retailer the ability to carry a wide selection of items at competitive prices, while at the same time allowing him to provide good customer service.

Getting into the pet-care market

The distribution nitch for Enforcer Products, Cartersville, Ga., a line of non-plant related pesticides, is the traditional, specialized retailer. Says vice president sales and marketing, Jim Biggs, "We prefer channels of distribution that can educate the consumer on the benefits of our products. This is going to be particularly important with our new 'break-the-flea-and-tick-cycle' product kit, which represents an organized treatment for all the problem areas: the pet, the home and the yard."

Safer Inc., Wellesley, Mass., from the onset offered lawn and garden dealers pet-care products as cross-sell opportunities within its all-natural category of garden pesticides. To be added to its five-item pet care line for 1989 is Safer Flea & Tick Spray, a proprietary formula of fatty acids and pyrethrin that not only removes the irritant piperonyl butoxide but increases efficacy as well through the synergistic effect of the two actives.

Warren Lerfald, vice president of sales for Black Leaf Products, Des Plaines, Ill., says, "If nothing else, the lawn and garden dealer can subsidize his otherwise seasonal business with counter-seasonal items. That's why Black Leaf's wide line of garden chemicals is complemented by many non-plant ones." Bonide Chemical, Yorkville, N.Y., falls into the same category. Says Jim Wurz, "the mass-merchant is not going to lead the success of pesticides. That's in the hands of the independent."

The d-Con Co., Montvale, N.J., one of the household pesticide manufacturers, with more than $100 million in sales primarily through grocery stores and mass-merchants, recognizes the important role the lawn and garden independent plays in pesticide merchandising. Group product manager Tom Murphy says, "We have implemented a formal campaign for this class of trade that we know will be mutually beneficial. We are aware that many products can only do well through consumer education. And massive advertising and promotion will continue to increase d-Con awareness."

In Easton, Pa., Coulston International's acting director, Lawrence Feller, prefers to "sell the steak, not the sizzle," because his company's retail products, under the Perma-Kill name, are spin-offs of sophisticated formulas developed for government, agriculture and other industries.

Letting the consumer know

Other lines whose success involves a fair amount of consumer education include:

- Stick-em from J.T. Eaton & Co., Twinsburg, Ohio, the experts in non-poisonous, no-snap rodent traps and other bait products;
- Shoo-fly, an innovative line of hornet, wasp and flying insect killers packaged in precision delivery systems from Lynwood Labs Inc., Needham, Mass., and sold exclusively through hardware and garden distributors;
- Nu-Way Products, Chicago, makers of the first and only dry-mist flea and tick killer and marketers of specially-formulated household pesticides under the Pow! label;
- PIC Inc., Orange, N.J., which offers a quality household line at a lower price and caters to the independent; and
- the Aeroxon/Revenge line from Roxide, New Rochelle, N.Y., a collection of pest controls for home use.

Two hot new product brands to watch are the Bengal line and Whitmire's UltraGuard. Both Bengal Chemical Inc., Baton Rouge, La., and Whitmire Research Labs Inc., St. Louis, boast proprietary and revolutionary technology throughout their lines.

Bengal came to the market three years ago with the only roach spray that guaranteed roach extermination overnight. This was followed by an indoor dri-fogger and a wasp and hornet killer,"...the first products of their kind that are non-flammable, provide instant knock-down, are safe to use, are odorless and deliver amazing results!" exclaims an enthusiastic Bob LeBlanc, company president. "The pest control results speak for themselves, and our growth to $20 million in three years is evidence of customer satisfaction." LeBlanc gives credit to the retailing experts who took the time to educate and merchandise the line's features and benefits.

After many years as the pest-control technology leaders in many professional industries, Whitmire has announced its line of UltraGuard retail products. The company is at present only test marketing the line, however. If the test is successful, Whitmire will launch the products nationally. Marketed under brands such as X-clude and Knox-out in the greenhouse and PCO industries UltraGuard will consist of both home and garden products. Sales and marketing manager, Jeff Martin, says, "Our uniqueness comes in tech-

continued on page 63...

Table 1

Retail outlet	Household Insecticides	Outdoor non-plant Insecticides	Pet Insecticides
Lawn & garden centers	5%	15%	1%
Hardware stores	5	6	2
Home improvement	1	3	-
Farm supply stores	1	4	-
All others	88	72	97
Total manufacturers $	$440mm	$80mm	$250mm

Feedback

Compiled by Gina Kellogg Hogan, *associate editor*

Patio products are a profitable line to carry—if you are devoted to them, have the space for them and carry enough inventory, according to the respondents of the April/May 1988 *Lawn & Garden Marketing* questionnaire.

Experience may be a key to success in selling patio furniture lines; most of the respondents carrying have been in the business for 10 years. In fact, 50 percent have sold for 10 years or more.

Most of the respondents—43.7 percent—said that they became profitable in selling the lines during the first year. The second year was mentioned by 31.3 percent; 12.5 percent said they became profitable in the third year.

One of the main reasons that could induce a retailer to become interested in selling patio furniture is the average sale per customer. Ralph Gaudio, The "G" Boys Inc., Marlton, N.J., said that the average sale of patio furniture in his store is about $300. M.J. Moseng of the Bruce Co., Middleton, Wis., said his company's average sale of patio furniture is $750.

The typical markup on the lines, according to respondents, ranged between 30 and 40 percent. Snipes Farm & Nursery, Morrisville, Pa., has a typical markup of 40 percent or more, according to Hannah Hogan. She said that her business carries leisure furniture because of the good profits, and because it is a great way to diversify.

However, those who argue against selling patio furniture complain that the lines take up too much space—both on the showroom floor and in storage. Charles Wallace of Wallace & Son, Thomson, Ga., says space certainly is one of the reasons why his company does not carry, nor do they plan to carry, patio furniture. The lines simply take up too much space that could be devoted to other items.

However, for those retailers who do carry leisure furniture, the amounts of space devoted to the furniture varies. For instance, at Snipes Farm & Nursery, Hogan says her store devotes 2,500 sq. ft. to leisure furniture in-season, while at The Bruce Co., Moseng says his store devotes 7,500 sq. ft. to the lines in-season.

Because patio furniture is so seasonal, nearly all of the respondents—93.8 percent—discount the lines a great deal at the season's end. The median amount by which the respondents said they discount is 28.8 percent. Twenty-five percent of the respondents discount 15-24 percent; another 25 percent discount 25-34 percent.

Where do retailers go to see the lines and make their selections? Most of the respondents to *LGM's* questionnaire said they opt for the National Hardware Show—31.3 percent. Others attend the Casual Furniture Show in Chicago, 25 percent; the ACE Hardware Show, 18.8 percent; the National Home Center Show, Chicago, 12.5 percent; and the International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo in Louisville, Ky., 6.3 percent. Just under 13 percent said that they do not attend any shows.

Most retailers responding to the questionnaire seemed eager to let others know of the financial success these products offer. Overall, they seem to be saying, "Get into it, be devoted, carry the top lines and sell!"

- Choose your furniture lines carefully. Try to get exclusive lines just for your store. With space at a premium, keep your lines condensed and back up stock on your final choices so you will have stock when the customer makes their choice—*Ralph A. Gaudio, The "G" Boys Inc., Marlton, N.J.*

- Competition from mass-merchants is becoming tougher. Low-end products are less distinguishable from high-end merchandise. Consumer education is essential—*Hannah Hogan, Snipes Farm & Nursery, Morrisville, Pa.*

- Offer quality. Don't try to compete with discounter's promotional quality—*George Hara, George & Cliff's Hardware, St. Petersburg, Fla.*

- If you get into the business, get into it. Carry a full selection, from promotional web chairs to upscale sets. It works much better—*Joel Putnam, Hurst Stores, Ben Franklin/Ace Hardware, St. George, Utah*

- Always go with better-quality goods—step-up goods—*Jim Bills, Gibsons, Wichita Falls, Texas*

- It's a way to expand. I can see us carrying them in years to come. There are quite a few large homes with swimming pools around here—*Cindy Smith, Ins-N-Outs, St. Francisville, La.*

- Discount stores don't have the quality (products), so we could offer customers better quality. We've done this with lawn equipment; we carry top-of-the-line—*Eric Rotts, Eric's Lawn Equipment, Metairie, La.*

—LGM

Patio furniture lines

Percentage of types of patio furniture lines that are sold through lawn and garden outlets:

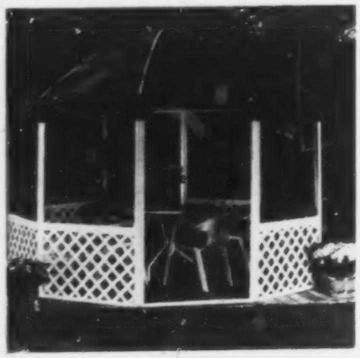
Type of patio furniture	Percentage	Type of patio furniture	Percentage
Wooden furniture	81.3%	Woven vinyl lounge chairs	62.5%
Umbrellas	75	Resin	18.8
Fabric-covered lounge chairs	68.8	Rattan/wicker	12.5
Complete fabric-covered table/chair sets	62.5	Wrought iron	12.5
		Misc.	18.8

Source: *Lawn & Garden Marketing* April/May 1988 questionnaire.

Images Fiberglass Products

Outdoor fiberglass tables will be displayed, along with PVC resin chairs, stacking tables, lazy susans, table servers, furniture cleaner, tempered-glass tables, umbrellas and cushions.

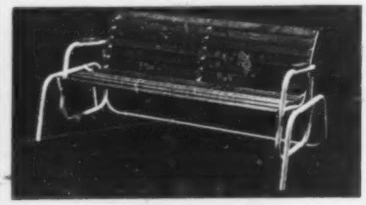
Circle (215) on Reply Card



General Aluminum Products Inc.

Exhibited will be the company's gazebo. Features include a heavy-duty aluminum frame and a weather-resistant fabric roof.

Circle (216) on Reply Card



Flanders Ind. Inc.

Royal Park outdoor furniture will be exhibited. Features include 1¹/₄-in. steel frames, high-gloss, polyester powder coating and lumber that is milled, molded, drilled and finished.

Circle (217) on Reply Card

Grosfillex

Displayed will be a complete line of resin leisure furniture, featuring stacking monoblock and adjustable high-back folding armchairs with matching tables.

Circle (218) on Reply Card

Cross-selling...continued

nology that provides consumers with the best of the best—that is, 100 percent efficacy, safety, convenience of use, less toxicity and instant-with-lasting results, all rolled into one. No other products can make that claim.

"Microencapsulation, high-tech delivery systems and special formulations are factors that contribute to the product benefits that today's consumer is looking for," Martin adds. For example, UltraGuard Wasp Stopper not only knocks down wasps instantly but forms a protective barrier against subsequent attackers who are otherwise lured to the site.

Whitmire will concentrate its distribution in lawn and garden and hardware networks, because these types of retailers are knowledgeable experts who can inform consumers of today's newest pest control technology.

Retailers should take a chance

As Mal Hollander, vice president of sales for Burlington Biomedical Corp., Farmingdale, N.Y., puts it, "Rather than resist them, independents will do well to lead them." Hollander is talking about new products, new technologies, spin-off categories and any products that sell best when backed by information and service. His company, which manufactures a line of ecologically safe animal repellents called RO-PEL, directs its distribution through retailers who are service oriented.

Retailers need to be on the lookout for products or brands that offer them a competitive nitch. They should be aware of products that can broaden category selection for the consumer who shops there for traditional supplies. And they should look for products that lend themselves more favorably to being sold with the kind of effort only an expert can provide.

Manufacturers are not the only group who profit from multiple positioning. Dealers who exploit their value-added services and offer products that do best when backed by these services will profit too. **—LGM**

Adele Rogers has spent the last nine years of her 20-year marketing, sales and general management career in the lawn and garden industry, beginning with W.R. Grace as marketing manager for Peters Plant Foods and Terra-lite soil amendments. She then joined Safer Inc. and eventually became vice president of U.S. operations. Rogers is currently operating a marketing and management services firm, which concentrates on assisting primarily lawn and garden companies to identify product and promotional opportunities, as well as providing hands-on project execution. For more information, you may contact her at (603) 382-5888.

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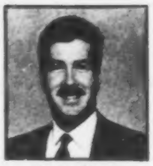

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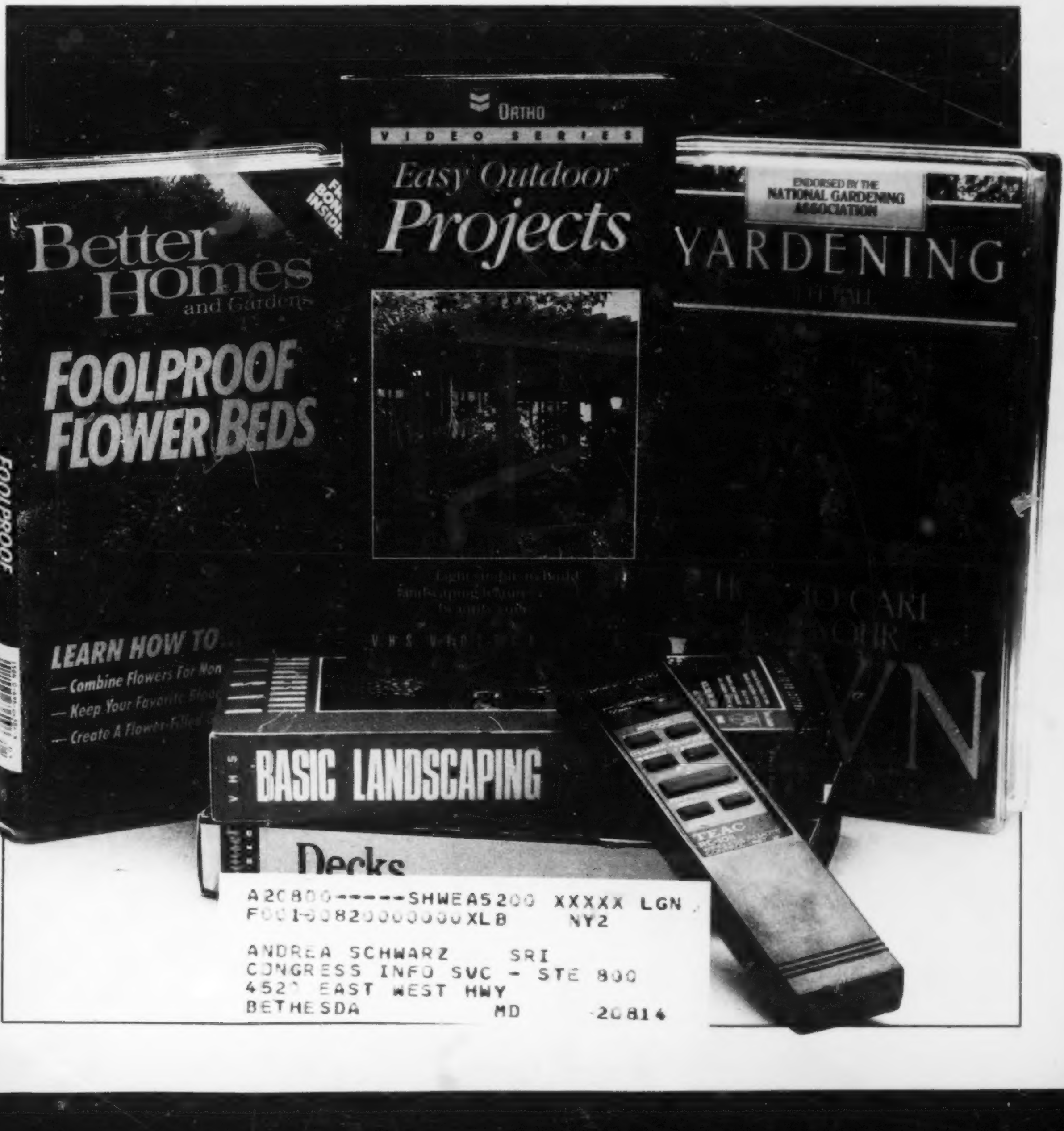
Lawn&Garden Marketing™

SEPTEMBER 1988

An Intertec publication

Cover story: Lawn & garden DIY videos

Expo review • OPE buyer demographics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PUBLISHED 10 TIMES ANNUALLY
SEPTEMBER 1988
VOL. 27, NO. 8

Lawn&Garden Marketing™

The merchandising magazine for lawn, garden and leisure living products.

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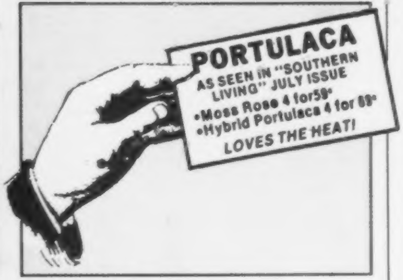
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Did you know?

When asked in a survey to name the best plant food type among three choices, 33.7 percent of respondents named controlled-release, 29.9 percent named continuous feeding and 29.9 percent named timed-release feeding, 6.4 percent gave no answer.

Source: *Better Homes and Gardens* consumer panel, September 1987

Lawn & Garden Marketing (ISSN 0091-4665) is published 10 times annually free to qualified subscribers by Intertec Publishing—A Macmillan Co., 9221 Quivira Rd., Overland Park, KS 66215. 2nd-class postage paid at Shawnee Mission, KS and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12960, Overland Park, KS 66212.
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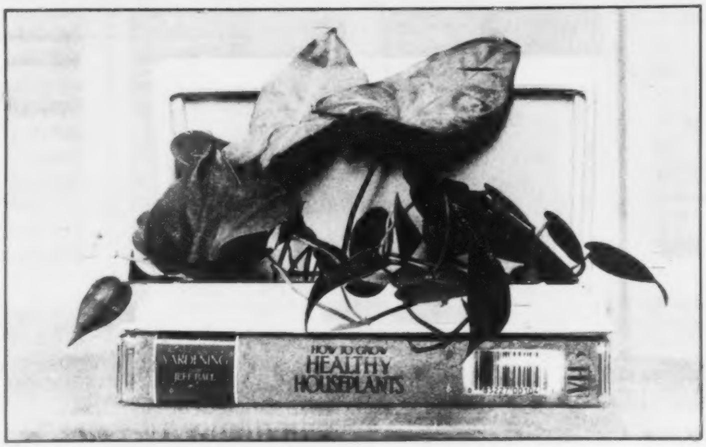
From the Editor



In a Roper Organization study comparing 20 hobbies, forms of relaxation and other personal interests, VCRs topped the "most favorite" list.

In my July column, I described to you how hobbies, such as VCR watching, actually compete for your sales dollar because consumers who are watching VCRs are not participating in lawn and garden activities, and those who are planning a VCR purchase may not buy lawn and garden supplies from you. Now, I want to tell you how you can turn VCR watching to your advantage.

On pages 6-8 of this issue, we feature information about DIY lawn and garden videos available through retail. DIY videos, one of the newest and certainly most entertaining forms of education, bring into your customer's home subject matter of interest to him—at a time that is most convenient to him. To date, about eight video suppliers offer nearly three dozen lawn and garden titles.

Results from a 1988 *LGM* study show that presently only 15 percent of lawn and garden retailers stock DIY lawn and garden videos for retail sales. Yet, nearly 48 percent indicate they are considering carrying them in the future. I believe industry retailers should seriously consider selling DIY videos because videos help educate the customer without tying up salespeople, compensate for untrained employees and, best of all, provide sales profit.

The potential for sales is certainly in your favor. According to the Electronic Industries Assn., some 75 million prerecorded video cassettes were sold in 1986; 1987 produced even greater sales, because the number of U.S. households owning VCRs increased to nearly 50 percent, and videotape prices decreased, making them more appealing to own. As of June 1987, 36 percent of all U.S. households had purchased prerecorded video cassettes.

From an educational standpoint, the value of viewing videos, combined with in-store assistance (and possibly a DIY book), clearly is tremendous. Statistics reveal that if you only explain information to someone, in 72 hours he will retain only 10 percent of that information. If you show him by example, he will retain 25 percent of it. But if you show him and tell him, he will retain 70 percent of it. Therefore, the best way to provide lasting lawn and garden advice to your customer is through the availability of a video.

But even if you don't want to sell the product line, I think you can benefit from simply knowing what titles are available and where they can be obtained. For example, check nearby video rental stores to find out what lawn and garden DIY videos they stock. Then, in your store, reference the titles and availability near appropriate merchandise with tags saying "For more information on...."

Or, why not with every $50 purchase of plant materials, give customers a certificate for a free rental of the appropriate L&G cassette at the local video store. Maybe the local video dealer could even put your endorsement next to the DIY lawn and garden category: "As recommended by Acme Garden Center."

What better way to convince your customer that you really care about the success of his lawn and garden venture than to *show* him as well as *tell* him?

Susan L. Anderson

Lawn & Garden Marketing

LAWN & GARDEN MARKETING, Vol. 27, No. 8, is published 10 times annually Jan-April, June-Nov by Intertec Publishing—A Macmillan Co., 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212, (913) 888-4664.

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Subscription info: Publication mailed free in U.S./Canada to qualified persons in retail/wholesale businesses responsible for buying/merchandising product lines and services related to landscaping, gardening, turf, patio, indoor plants and leisure living. Non-qualified subscriptions are $24 a year (U.S) or $30 (Canada and other countries). Foreign airmail optional at extra $55/year. Single copy price $2 plus postage/handling. Back issue price, $3 plus postage/handling. Adjustments necessitated by paid subscription termination at single copy rate. Allow 6-8 weeks for address change or new subscription processing. Address subscription correspondence to P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.

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Correspondence: Mail to 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212.

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Feedback

Compiled by Gina Kellogg Hogan, *associate editor*

DIY videos are still such a novel idea in the lawn and garden industry that many retailers are unfamiliar with the product. But those who are familiar note how helpful and interesting videos can be to their business.

Of the respondents to the June 1988 *Lawn & Garden Marketing* survey on DIY videos, just under 15 percent presently carry the product. But of those who do not, half said they are interested and are considering carrying the line.

Of those already "in the know" about DIY videos, some say they carry videos to help consumers accomplish lawn and garden tasks more easily on their own. Others carry videos that they lend to their customers to help them better understand how properly to use the equipment. Others use the videos to help their employees get a better understanding of what the industry is all about.

One hardware store retailer in New York said that videos increase his store's sales of L&G products. Others noted the educational benefits of the products. A power equipment dealer in Marina Del Ray, Calif., said, "We can show the proper operating and maintenance of equipment" through selling videos. A garden center retailer in Gadsden, Ala., sells the videos for the same reason, "to help people learn these things," he said. And yet another garden center respondent from Dayton, Ohio, said he stocks the videos as a consumer benefit. "They are loaned for free," he explained. A multi-department store retailer in New York, N.Y., said simply, "They sell well."

For those retailers who may be interested in getting in the business of carrying videos, these respondents had some suggestions:

- Place them up front. Keep them visible. They have done well for us.

- Buy on approval only. Some are poorly scripted and contain obsolete, incorrect methods.

- Playing the videos would help. For me, they are a slow sale.

- Preview all videos and make sure the products suggested in them are or can be included in your line.

Other retailers who are interested in carrying the lines evidently recognize the value of selling videos, for the reasons they give for considering carrying the lines echo the comments of retailers who already sell them.

- Customer convenience and impulse reactions.

- Possible sales opportunities and profits.

- Gets customers' attention. Holds them in the store longer. Adds sales.

- It helps sell the products and explains in detail in a shorter period of time than a salesman could allow himself to give.

- To have another way of helping our customers.

- To better inform the public without tying up salespeople.

- To compensate for untrained employees and for (the industry's) image.

- Customers can learn complex skills on their own time, instead of taking much of our time answering questions, though we welcome questions.

Most of the respondents who sold videos have only been involved with the product line for less than two years. The most commonly sold videos, according to our respondents, were from Ortho Consumer Products, San Francisco, and the "Yardening" series from Kartes Video, Indianapolis.

Other videos that were mentioned by respondents were Hometime Videos, Eden Prairie, Minn.; "The Victory Garden" from Crown Publishers, Avenel, N.J.; "John Deere Safety Programs" from Deere & Co., Moline, Ill.; "Foolproof Flowerbeds" from Better Homes and Gardens Video Library, Des Moines, Iowa; the "Joy of Gardening" series from Magic Video, St. Louis; and "Square Foot Gardening" from Sterling Video Group, Bristol, R.I.

Most of the respondents said they play the videos during shopping hours and typically mark them up 25-39 percent; prices ranged from $9.95 to $29.95. The most commonly referred to source of competitor was the discounter or other discounters.

The National Hardware Show, which takes place each August in Chicago, and the International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo, in Louisville, Ky., in July, were the two most-mentioned tradeshows where respondents said they look for videos. Also mentioned was the National Home Center Show, also in Chicago.

Most admit that the videos are impulse purchases, although they do suggest the videos to their customers. One age group does not seem to dominate, and the videos seem to be of equal interest to both men and women.

As for why more retailers don't carry the products, most of our respondents said that their customers had not requested the product, or that they did not know enough about the products to carry them. However, with the growing interest in videos over the last few years, and the number of new videos presently being introduced (see DIY Videos, page 6), that aspect will no doubt soon change. **—LGM**

DIY videos

Retailers who sell lawn and garden DIY videos:

Business category	**Percentage**
Hardware store	21.3
Home center	10.6
Independent garden center	34
Multi-department store	6.4
Power equipment dealer	27.7

Source: *Lawn & Garden Marketing* June 1988 survey.

Retail Marketplace

Safer expands distribution network

Safer Inc., Wellesley, Mass., has contracted for the services of two distribution plants to make customer service to the East and West Coasts easier.

The West Coast facility, Ontario, Calif., serves Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Alaska and Hawaii and cuts shipping time to these states by as much as seven days.

The East Coast facility, Camp Hill, Pa., helps Safer deliver products to customers in the territories it serves within three days of order. These territories include New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, Virginia and West Virginia.

In other news from Safer, Timothy R. Zink has been appointed vice president of the newly formed commercial and agricultural division. Zink will be responsible for all marketing and sales operations for commercial products for the arbor, lawn care and nursery industries and agricultural products for edible crops.

Applications being accepted for Green Medal Awards

Past National Gardening grant recipients whose programs are still growing gardens with children are eligible to apply for the National Gardening Assn.'s Green Medal Awards. Ten Green Medal Awards, valued at $1,000, are presented annually to 10 of the best previous grant recipients with proven creative educational programming, community support and long-term sustainability.

The awards consist of garden carts from Agri-Fab, Sullivan, Ill.; videos from Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn, N.Y.; hose couplers and kits from Gardena Inc., Minnetonka, Minn.; watering systems from GardenAmerica Corp., Carson City, Nev.; composters from Gardener's Supply Co., Burlington, Vt.; hose from Harvard Industries, Worthington, Ohio; cultivators and shredders from Mantis Mfg., Huntingdon Valley, Pa.; and fruit trees from Stark Bros. Nurseries, Louisiana, Mo.

The first Awards, presented last year, benefitted 16,600 youths.

Home pesticide concerns to be addressed at convention

The safe handling and use of pesticides in the home, in a program titled "Are You Spraying More Than Bugs?," will be presented during the 76th National Safety Council Congress & Exposition to be held Oct. 16-20 in Orlando, Fla.

The program, developed by the Council's Home Safety Division, will address the reality that, while the industry has many restrictions on the transport, storage, use and disposal of pesticides, few apply to home-owners.

Susan Whitney, pesticide education specialist of the Institute of Food & Agricultural Services, University of Florida, Gainesville, Fla., will be the featured speaker.

L&G spending at discounters

Average household spending on garden supplies in discount stores ranked 15th out of 33 categories measured. Total average spending at discounters in 1987 was $840.65.

Ranking	Category	$ Spent
1	Women's wear	$ 100.46
5	Linens/domestics	52.20
10	Shoes	26.41
15	Garden supplies	21.27
20	Jewelry/watches	16.81
25	Handbags/accessories	9.83
30	Pet supplies	4.37

Source: June 1988 *Discount Merchandiser*

Fiskars unifies worldwide consumer business

Wayne G. Fethke, president, Fiskars Mfg. Corp., Wausau, Wis., has been named to head the newly restructured worldwide operations for Fiskars Consumer Products Group.

Until now, the Consumer Products Group had been divided into three separate units: Consumer Products Group USA, Consumer Products Group Pacific Rim—both headed by Fethke; and Consumer Products Group Europe. The new structure unifies the three units into one worldwide group headed by Fethke.

Briefs

- A 30-min. VHS color video titled "Landscape Irrigation Maintenance & Troubleshooting" has been released by the **California Landscape Contractors Assn.** The tape features step-by-step guidelines for installing and maintaining landscape irrigation systems. It was developed for industry training and classroom instruction.

- Two sales representatives have been appointed to **Ball Seed Co.,** West Chicago, Ill. Andrew Brown will service growers throughout central Pennsylvania, and Swayne Schilling will be responsible for accounts in western North Carolina.

- Michael Kennedy has been appointed director of marketing for the **Sudbury Lawn and Garden Products Division** of Farnam Co. Inc., Phoenix, Az.

- BPI, The Professional Plant Growers Assn., has a new headquarters in Lansing, Mich. The new mailing address is P.O. Box 27517, Lansing, MI 48909.

- **Anchor Swan,** Worthington, Ohio, promoted three executives to new positions during a recent restructuring. Norman Crawford has been named vice president, consumer and industrial products; James F. Powell has been promoted to vice president of sales, consumer products; and James R. Sayers has been appointed director of marketing for consumer and industrial products.

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OPEI study defines consumer demographics

Each week, the OPEI calls thousands of households to ask them when and where they made their most recent power equipment purchase. Their responses can help retailers better define their business strategies.

Being in tune with the market is a smart way for retailers to get the jump on competitors who do not take a serious look at demographics. Retailers who keep up with the most recent demographics of OPE buyers have a better chance at servicing sales.

In an effort to help the industry learn more about its consumers and the retail market, the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute and its members are conducting an on-going research program designed to track U.S. sales of walk-behind and riding mowers, lawn and garden tractors, snowblowers, tillers and engines.

Results of this new OPEI Retail Sales Program include four key areas that can directly affect business activities and profits.

In sales by retail channel, both lawn and garden centers and OPE dealers account for smaller percentages of walk-behind mower sales: lawn and garden centers account for 12 percent of sales of walk-behinds, with OPE dealers having only a 3 percent share. Hardware stores have a somewhat stronger position, with a 17 percent share.

However, when you look at the more expensive products, such as riding mowers and lawn and garden tractors, a different picture emerges, as both OPE dealers and L&G outlets have a considerably higher market share. Looking at the sales of lawn and garden tractors, OPE dealers have a 13 percent share, and lawn and garden centers have a 15 percent share. This increase can be found in riding mower sales, also. OPE dealers have an 11 percent retail market share, and lawn and garden centers have 26 percent share. But hardware stores experience a decrease in sales of these products, as they hold an 8 percent share of lawn and garden tractor sales and an 11 percent share of riding mower sales.

Such substantial increases in the market shares of OPE dealers and L&G outlets—as well as the decreases in shares among hardware stores—should alert retailers to the trends of buyers, and changes in sales strategies should be made, if necessary.

Furthermore, retail market shares of snowblowers are 6 percent for OPE dealers, 18 percent for lawn and garden centers, and 22 percent for hardware stores, and shares for walk-behind tillers are 8 percent for OPE dealers, 14 percent for lawn and garden dealers, and 13 percent for hardware stores.

In pricing by retail channel, data show that lawn and garden centers and OPE dealers sell at a higher average price than any other group. For instance, national retailers sell walk-behind mowers for an average of $263, while OPE dealers sell them for an average of $304 and lawn and garden centers for an average of $363. Hardware stores also sell walk-behinds at a higher average price of $309. Lawn tractors go for an average of $1,256 at national retailer outlets, for an average of $2,484 at OPE outlets and an average of $2,146 at lawn and garden centers.

continued...

Demographics...continued

However, the average price of these tractors at hardware stores is only $1,185. These prices should make retailers realize the quality and services customers in each outlet expect.

Results of the study's consumer profile include data eliminating some stereotypes and preconceived notions about "who buys outdoor power equipment."

For instance, according to the study, the typical buyer is not necessarily male. Seventeen percent of walk-behind mower buyers are female, and an additional 15 percent are female buyers accompanied by males. Females also account for 12 percent of snowthrower purchases, as well as 12 percent of tiller purchases. And when accompanied by males, females are involved in 14 percent of snowthrower purchases and 15 percent of tiller purchases.

It is clear by these results that any retailer who does not have a sales pitch directed to women is simply ignoring a large group of potential buyers, and thereby losing sales.

continued...

How the retail outlets are defined

Nine classes of retail outlets are included in OPEI's Retail Sales Program data. In the continuing survey, consumers are asked, "In what store was the (specific OPE item) purchased?" If the respondent answers Sears, J.C. Penney, Montgomery Ward, K mart, Wal-Mart, Western Auto or Lowes, no further questions are asked. If an outlet other than the above is mentioned, the consumer is read a list of outlet types and asked to indicate the one that describes the specific outlet. No definitions of outlet types are read to the consumer.

For the purpose of understanding the data from this program, however, OPEI gives the following definitions:

National retailer: The following retailers only are in this category: Sears, J.C. Penney, Montgomery Ward and Western Auto.

Discount store: Includes K mart, Wal-Mart and other departmentalized retail establishments with self-service hardgoods, health and beauty aids, apparel and other softgoods departments.

Department store: Departmentalized retail establishments carrying a general line of apparel, home furnishings and housewares.

Lawn and garden center: A retail establishment primarily carrying lawn and garden supplies and tools, such as fertilizer, lawn sprinklers, nursery stock, seeds and bulbs, and outdoor power equipment.

Hardware store: Retail establishments primarily carrying a number of basic hardware lines, such as hand tools, power tools, builders' hardware, paint and glass, housewares, and household appliances and cutlery.

Home center: Includes Lowes and similar establishments that specialize primarily in home improvement items, lumber and related materials.

OPE dealer: A retail establishment primarily carrying outdoor power equipment. Also, includes farm equipment stores.

Farm supply store: A retail establishment primarily carrying farm supplies, such as fertilizer, livestock feed, seeds and related materials.

Other: Includes rental/appliance/auto/motorcycle/bicycle/marine dealer, TV shopping show, mail order and any other purchase not fitting the above categories.

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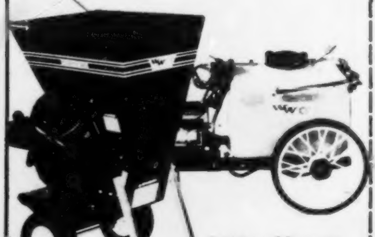

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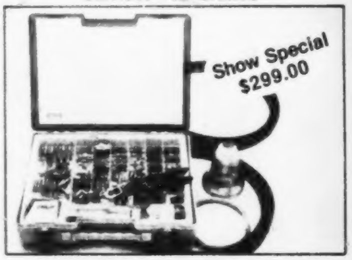

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Demographics...continued

The age of buyers also is a factor worth considering. The data of this study shows that buyers of riding mowers and tractors have the oldest median age, 42, and walk-behind mower purchasers have the youngest median age, 39. Both snowblower and tiller buyers have a median age of 40.

The household median annual income for outdoor power equipment buyers ranges from about $37,000 to $50,000. These statistics also should be taken into account when planning advertising strategies and how to make products appeal to customers.

Another comparison made in the study was between first-time and replacement buyers. Experienced buyers were found to pay from 12 to 51 percent more, which indicates that the replacement buyer purchases a more upgraded product with upgraded features.

The fourth area covered in the study was geographic sales patterns. The data show that sales of lawn and garden products generally reflect the population distribution in the United States. The top five regions are the East North Central, South Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic, Southwest and Pacific. However, as would be expected, the northeastern sections of the country had the largest sales for snowblowers. **—LGM**

First-time vs. replacement buyers

Without a doubt, experienced buyers—those replacing a product—clearly are paying more for that item, typically upgrading the product and features.

Product	First-time buyer	Replacement buyer	% Change
Walk-behind	$ 193	$ 232	20%
Rider	1,072	1,205	12
Lawn tractor	1,118	1,354	21
Garden tractor	1,052	2,799	51
Snowblower	331	432	30
Tiller	392	499	27

Source: 1988 OPEI retail sales report

The OPEI Retail Sales Program is conducted via telephone by contacting more than 5,000 randomly selected U.S. households each week to ask if a particular product has been purchased in the past three-12 months.

The results of this program were presented by George Griffin, vice president, Industrial Marketing Research, during OPEI's annual meeting in Napa Valley, Calif. Griffin also presented analyses of the program at the International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo in Louisville, Ky., as part of his "Using Information About OPE Customers to Increase Your Profits—An Industry Report" seminar.

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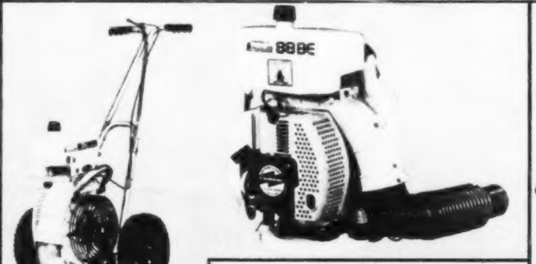

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Cover story: Getting back to the basics

NHS review • Ignition systems

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PUBLISHED 10 TIMES ANNUALLY
OCTOBER 1988
VOL. 27, NO. 9

Lawn&Garden Marketing™

The merchandising magazine for lawn, garden and leisure living products.

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The last hose you'll ever buy

Worth a Look, 12

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and

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Did you know?

Statistically, you have the potential to serve more households. The number of U.S. households increased by 12 percent in 1980-1987—even though total population increased only 7 percent. The increase is credited to a decline in the average number of people per household.

Source: Bureau of the Census

Lawn & Garden Marketing (ISSN 0091-4665) is published 10 times annually free to qualified subscribers by Intertec Publishing—A Macmillan Co., 9221 Quivira Rd., Overland Park, KS 66215. 2nd-class postage paid at Shawnee Mission, KS and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Lawn & Garden Marketing*, P.O. Box 12960, Overland Park, KS 66212.
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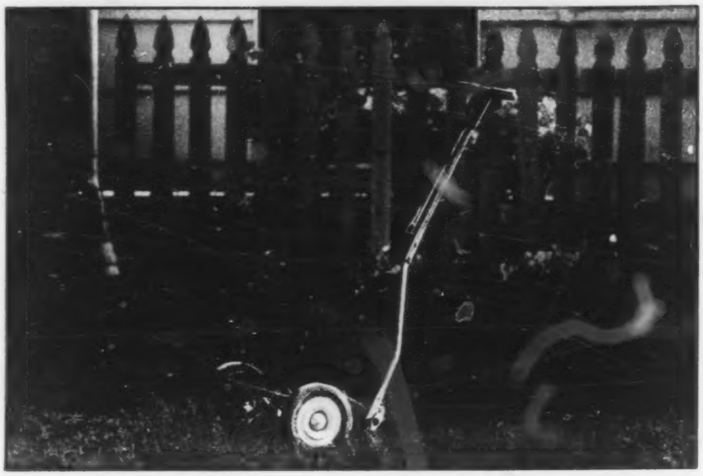
From the Editor



I don't believe in the fortunes tucked inside fortune cookies—though I do admit that I am sincerely disappointed when I don't receive a good one. I don't read my horoscope, consult astrologers or listen to weathermen to help prepare me for the day. Yet, I am totally hooked on economic forecasts.

Soothsayers for the industry try to predict how the state of the economy will affect lawn and garden purchases. Economists, real estate consultants, even psychologists, now are trying to predict what 1989 will hold for retailers and consumers alike. Factored into their predictions are the 1988 drought, the residuals of the October 1987 stockmarket crash, the presidential election year and how each event affects consumer confidence levels.

With one of the most unusual predictions for the industry to date, Robert Butterworth, a Los Angeles psychologist who has studied the Democratic presidential candidate's personal habits and likings, says some national trends will be influenced by a Dukakis presidential win in November. For example, "in" will be hand-powered lawnmowers. What? A reel mower in every garage?

Another expert predicts a downturn in consumer interest in single-family dwellings, partly due to the "tedious" task of lawnmowing. Sandy Goodkin, executive director of Peat Marwick/Goodkin Real Estate Consulting Group in San Diego, predicts that less-expensive attached housing will lure working people away from single-family homeownership. Goodkin says time is too valuable for working men and women, "who find little appeal in spending their weekends making home repairs and mowing the lawn." Goodkin obviously is not aware of the health benefits—not to mention the monetary benefits—derived from investments in lawn and garden tasks.

Economist Ray Daniel, of Wharton Econometric Forecasting Associates, perhaps one of the most well-versed consultants on lawn and garden, presented his forecast for the industry in July. His analysis and forecast is based on the three key economic indicators: housing starts, interest rates and discretionary income.

Acknowledging the reverberations of the 1988 drought on 1989 sales, Daniel is predicting that, although manufacturers' shipments of OPE products may see a decline in 1989, retail sales of OPE products should increase. The drought will have a large impact on food inflation, but it will not force the economy into a recession, he says. Therefore, discretionary income should be available for lawn and garden, and retail sales of lawn and garden equipment should rebound after the impact of the drought has passed.

Lucky for this industry, we don't have to wait for Nancy Reagan's astrologer to decide on matters of great importance to us. After all, the stars are of little value to an industry that depends mostly on the sun. Besides, despite all the expert forecasting, the most influential factor facing 1989 lawn and garden sales is rainfall. Perhaps an Indian raindance would be most appropriate.

Susan L. Anderson

Lawn&Garden Marketing

LAWN & GARDEN MARKETING, Vol. 27, No. 9, is published 10 times annually Jan-April, June-Nov by Intertec Publishing—A Macmillan Co., 9221 Quivira Rd., P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212, (913) 888-4664.

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Subscription info: Publication mailed free in U.S./Canada to qualified persons in retail/wholesale businesses responsible for buying/merchandising product lines and services related to landscaping, gardening, turf, patio, indoor plants and leisure living. Non-qualified subscriptions are $24 a year (U.S) or $30 (Canada and other countries). Foreign airmail optional at extra $55/year. Single copy price $2 plus postage/handling. Back issue price, $3 plus postage/handling. Adjustments necessitated by paid subscription termination at single copy rate. Allow 6-8 weeks for address change or new subscription processing. Address subscription correspondence to P.O. Box 12901, Overland Park, KS 66212-0930.

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Feedback

Compiled by Gina Kellogg Hogan, *associate editor*

Most people who rent equipment to their customers believe it is a worthwhile service—even though insurance costs and liability can be a problem, said respondents to a survey in the July issue of *Lawn & Garden Marketing.*

Positive public relations is the reason most respondents say they offer rental equipment; offering the service keeps customers satisfied when their equipment is in the shop. But the negative side is enough to make other respondents dissatisfied with offering the service.

Mike Boulay, vice president of Suburban Sales & Rental Center, Cockeysville, Md., says rentals are an integral part of his store's business. Boulay has rented equipment for more than 10 years at his store and makes more than $5,000 annually from the service. Boulay is typical of most of the respondents to *LGM's* survey. Nearly 41 percent of the respondents who offer rental equipment have been offering the service for 10 years or more; most respondents—just under 33 percent—make $5,000 or more each year from it.

Almost 94 percent of the respondents say they service the equipment, as well as rent it, reflecting the response of one reader who says, "We do not rent OPE because of a lack of repair facilities. If you cannot service, you should not rent." Most—71.4 percent—say they purchase their rental equipment from their distributor.

Like Boulay, other respondents were positive about rental equipment. Douglas Sharpe, general manager at Air-Cooled Engines, Dubuque, Iowa, says, "Rental equipment is an excellent source of add-on dollars and (sales) leads." Others think rentals are worthwhile *if* rental owners keep in mind a few tips. Alan Broussard, vice president, Ray & Flo Inc., Breaux Bridge, La., says, "Rental equipment is a good tool for selling and demonstrating high-end products." But, he adds, "Watch out for liability. For example, on chainsaws."

Another respondent, a power equipment dealer/rental center in Dayton, Ohio, says, "Rental equipment is our main business. (It's a) good business, if you understand how to price and *get enough deposit,*" he emphasizes.

A power equipment dealer in Park River, N.D., says, "Rental equipment is an excellent way to introduce our products to customers. Renting does *not* reduce sales; it improves our sales potential."

Mike Estes, owner of Rick's Garden Center, Colorado Springs, Colo., says, "We started our rental business for numerous reasons...It seems like the perfect addition to our store."

Other respondents recognized the increasing marketplace of rental equipment. "It fills a need and seems to be growing," says one power equipment respondent from Wichita Falls, Texas. Paul Ryan, manager, Ryan Lumber Co., Fabens, Texas, says, "I think rentals are a promising area."

Rental equipment

Of outdoor power equipment products offered for rent, power rakes are the most common; snowthrowers are the least common.

Type of equipment	Percentage
Power rakes	61.2
Walk-behind mowers	59.2
Tillers	49.0
Trimmers	48.9
Power edgers	44.8
Blowers/vacs	40.8
Logsplitters	38.8
Chainsaws	34.7
Chippers/shredders	34.7
Riding mowers	28.6
Snowthrowers	18.3

Source: Based on respondents to a survey in *Lawn & Garden Marketing* July 1988 who rent outdoor power equipment.

Other respondents in the business of renting have a more negative view of the service. One power equipment dealer in West Hartford, Conn., says, "People destroy the equipment; they don't use the machines with care and are abusive." At Silverado Hardware, Calistoga, Calif., Tim Petersen had enough problems with customers abusing the equipment that his firm eventually discontinued the service. He says, "We rented equipment for six years, and people were always breaking it; then they would say they (rented) it that way. You can't call a customer a liar. People have no respect for your property; it was very discouraging."

At a hardware store in Vineland, N.J., one respondent says, "The riding mowers are more trouble than they are worth....Maintenance takes out the profit on these rentals."

Similarly, Greg Malone, co-owner of Dugan's Garden Center, Olmsted Falls, Ohio, says, "We rent equipment only as a service to our customers. After the initial investment and repairs, we're lucky to break even." Santo DiBenedetto, manager at Salico Handy Rentals, Tom's River, N.J., adds, "Rentals are high profit when the rentals are out. But in the off-season, insurance can eat up profits."

And though some respondents saw rentals as a growing market, Dave Fawcett, general manager at Lyndale Hardware Co., Richfield, Minn., says, "It's a declining business due to the proliferation of rental yards."

One power equipment dealer in San Bernardino, Calif., offers some good advice to businesses that do rent equipment. "Test each product in rental. Keep maintenance records to show cost of repairs, so that you only use the most reliable and durable products; not all lawn and garden products are suitable for rentals."

Of those who offer the service, most —40.8 percent—advertise rentals in newspapers or circulars. Another 34.7 percent advertise rentals in the *Yellow Pages.* A few advertise rentals by direct mail, radio and television.

Of those respondents who presently do not offer rental services, 22.9 say they are considering the service. Many—18.1 percent—are considering it because they think such a sideline would make for good add-on sales. Another 12 percent are thinking about it due to customer demand. **—LGM**

Retail Marketplace

K mart participates in Fall is for Planting program

For the first time this year, K mart garden centers are taking advantage of the Fall is For Planting campaign—banners, in-store signage and all. The mass-merchandiser is testing The Garden Council's fall program in about 850 stores in the Midwestern and Eastern areas of the country.

Dean Souden, vice president/general manager of the John Henry Co., Lansing, Mich., says that he promoted the idea to Bob Armstrong, K mart senior horticulture buyer. Since John Henry is a major supplier of plant material signage for K mart, Souden was aware the company was looking for a way to expand that department.

"The garden center is a very real profit center for them," says Souden. "And the (Fall is for Planting) program is consistent with K mart's effort to upgrade service."

Armstrong says the program ties in well with K mart's own fall program, already in place. According to Armstrong, K mart plans advertising promotions so far in advance—"We're already working on April of next year."—that it wasn't able to tie in the theme with its circular advertisements this year. However, Armstrong says K mart is using the theme during radio spots on Master Gardener Jerry Baker's show, which airs Saturdays and Sundays on Mutual Network.

Both Armstrong and Souden believe that K mart's participation will make the program more visible and beneficial for the industry as a whole.

Says Souden, "The Garden Council recognizes that the first issue is to make people aware that fall is a good time to plant....The more times (a consumer) comes into contact with the theme the better."

Superior Court rules in favor of pesticide formulators

A Superior Court judge has ruled that the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) had wrongly assessed pesticide formulator companies for the costs of testing active ingredients under a regulation implementing a state pesticide law. The court further directed the agency to stop enforcing the regulation.

Under the California Birth Defect Protection Act, CDFA in late 1987 issued assessment orders against formulator companies for a number of active ingredients used in pesticide products.

At a hearing on a suit filed by the Chemical Specialties Mfrs. Assn. (CSMA) and four other companies—Cardinal Chemical Co. Inc., Rancho Cordova, Calif.; Dexol Industries, Torrance, Calif.; Cardinal Laboratories Inc., Azusa, Calif; and Whitmire Research Labs, St. Louis—the judge told the CDFA's attorney that the legislature never intended that small formulator companies would be burdened with huge assessments that could drive them out of business.

The suit, filed May 19, challenged the CDFA refusal to follow the law by either obtaining the needed data from the manufacturers of the active ingredients or to complete the testing itself and assess the manufacturers for the cost of generating the data. The suit charged that the agency's regulation ignored the state's law—and the federal pesticide statute's—exemption of formulator companies from having to test the original active ingredients combined in end-use products.

Shopping for L&G brand names

When *Better Homes and Gardens* readers were asked, "When you shop for lawn and garden items, do you have specific brands in mind, do you rely on the store to offer advice on brands or are names unimportant on lawn and garden items?" most of the respondents said that brand names weren't important to them.

Statement	Percentage
Brands are unimportant for these items.	43.2
I look for specific brands.	36.3
I rely on store advice.	22.4
No answer.	1.7

Souce: Based on respondents to *Better Homes and Gardens* Consumer Panel survey of subscribers—a specific segment of *BH&G* readers, but not necessarily typical of consumers as a whole. Multiple answers were chosen by some respondents.

Northrup King acquires Fredonia Seed

Northrup King Co., Golden Valley, Minn., has purchased the Fredonia Seed Co., a consumer packet seed company based in Fredonia, N.Y. Northrup will continue to offer the Fredonia-brand line, and sales, customer service and marketing will be integrated to provide increased overall support for both brands. Northrup King markets packet flowers and vegetable seeds throughout all 50 states.

Briefs

- **The North American Horticultural Supply Assn.** was formed in June, when nearly 60 delegates representing distributors and manufacturers in the horticulture industry gathered in Kansas City, Mo., for the first meeting. Those interested in joining the organization should contact executive director Wendy Webber, 1900 Arch St., Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 564-3484.

- **A.H. Hoffman Inc.,** Landisville, Pa., has been awarded the 1988 Clio Award for Package Design for Household Products. The packages are illustrated with brightly colored photographs of flowers and vegetables, depending on what the package contains.

- Peter H. Lubeck has been promoted to marketing manager at **RL Corp.,** Lowell, Mich. Lubeck will be responsible for product development and marketing.

Power Equipment Report

Expo 88 breaks its own records

The International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo ended another successful show, with a record-breaking registration of 22,349 people. The Expo, which took place July 25-27 in Louisville, Ky., had more than 550 exhibitors, and indoor exhibit space covered 270,000 sq. ft.; the Outdoor Demonstration Area covered 450,000 sq. ft.

For the first time this year, retailers were asked to indicate on registration forms whether they carry consumer or commercial products or both. Of all retailers/dealers registered, 46 percent said they carry consumer lines; 5 percent carry strictly commercial; and 49 percent said they carry both.

About 40 percent of the exhibits featured nonpower products, and nearly 1,000 international visitors from 50 countries attended. Excluding exhibitors, the attendance breakdown was: 40 percent retailers/dealers; 23 percent distributors; 18 percent manufacturers' reps; 11 percent trade visitors; 4 percent merchandisers/buyers; 2 percent press; 2 percent commercial mowing contractors and golf course superintendents.

Expo 89 will take place July 31-Aug. 2, 1989, in Louisville. The Expo 89 Planning Committee met at the end of September to discuss exhibit hours, the seminar program, proposals for new features and a full review of the show.

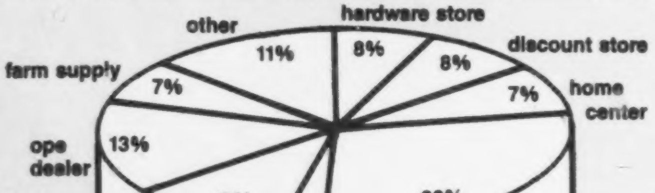
OPEI offers packet on radio program

A packet containing materials that explain the "Our Back Yard" radio program, being sponsored by the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, is available to retailers. "Our Back Yard" is a series of minute-long radio reports that cover a wide variety of lawn-related topics of importance to consumers.

The reports, narrated by Silas Gardner, a fictitious character who acts as spokesman, will contain interviews with authorities on power equipment and lawn and garden care. They will air in the top 100 OPE markets. Stations will broadcast each program during peak listening periods, and the series will begin April 3, 1989, and run through June 30, 1989.

Co-op ad support is being sponsored by manufacturers for retailers who wish to tie-in to the ads in their markets.

The packet, available from OPEI, lists the top 100 markets, the average cost, sample letters that manufacturers can send to retailers, explanation of corporate sponsorship and a list of subjects to be covered in the program. Contact Dennis Pavan, Belden/Frenz/Lehman Inc., 24500 Center Ridge Rd., Westlake, Ohio 44145, (216) 835-4000.



Retail market share
Lawn & garden tractors

National retailers have the greatest market share of lawn & garden tractors; equipment rental dealers have the lowest market share.

Source: 1988 OPEI outdoor power equipment retail sales report

Snowthrower shipments predicted up for '89 season

U.S. manufacturers are anticipating a strong 1989 season for snowthrowers, based on the above-average snowfalls on the East Coast and across the country over the last year, which reduced inventory at the retail level.

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute reported an increase of 1.1 percent of total snowthrower shipments for the 1988 model year, according to the OPEI *Executive Update* newsletter. Manufacturers reported shipping 532,000 single- and two-stage units, compared to 526,000 the previous year.

Briefs

- Dan Ariens is the new manufacturing manager at the **Ariens Co.,** Brillion, Wis. Tom Adrians is the new controller; Ron Vermeland is the new vice president, operations.

- Dean Meyer has been appointed sales and marketing manager for **Encore Mfg. Co. Inc.,** Beatrice, Neb.

- Dan Cartell has been appointed consumer product supervisor of Compton, Calif.-based **Kubota Tractor Corp.'s** northern division. James L. Clark is the new consumer product supervisor of the company's southeast division. Don Wieser is new vice president of manufacturing and will handle manufacturing activities at Kubota Mfg. America's new facility in Gainesville, Ga. The facility is a new 70,000 sq. ft. manufacturing plant, scheduled to be in production by Jan. 1.

- **Sabre Textron,** Columbia, S.C., has expanded its marketing and distribution in Australia and New Zealand to fulfill demands in those countries for saw chain and other OPE accessories.

- James Myers is new vice president, international marketing and OEM sales for **Simplicity Mfg. Inc.,** Port Washington, Wis. G. Christopher Covert is new vice president, quality assurance.

- Bama Power Products Inc., Clanton, Ala., is a new distributor for **Solo Inc.,** Newport News, Va. Bama will market and sell Solo's OPE line for home and commercial use in Alabama and the Florida panhandle.